



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

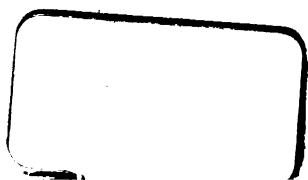
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



1944



M 55.1 [Rec]

6 NOV 1956<sup>To</sup> be returned

~~15 JUN 1987~~  
9 MAR 1970

~~12 MAR 1981~~

67 MAR 1991

CANCELLED

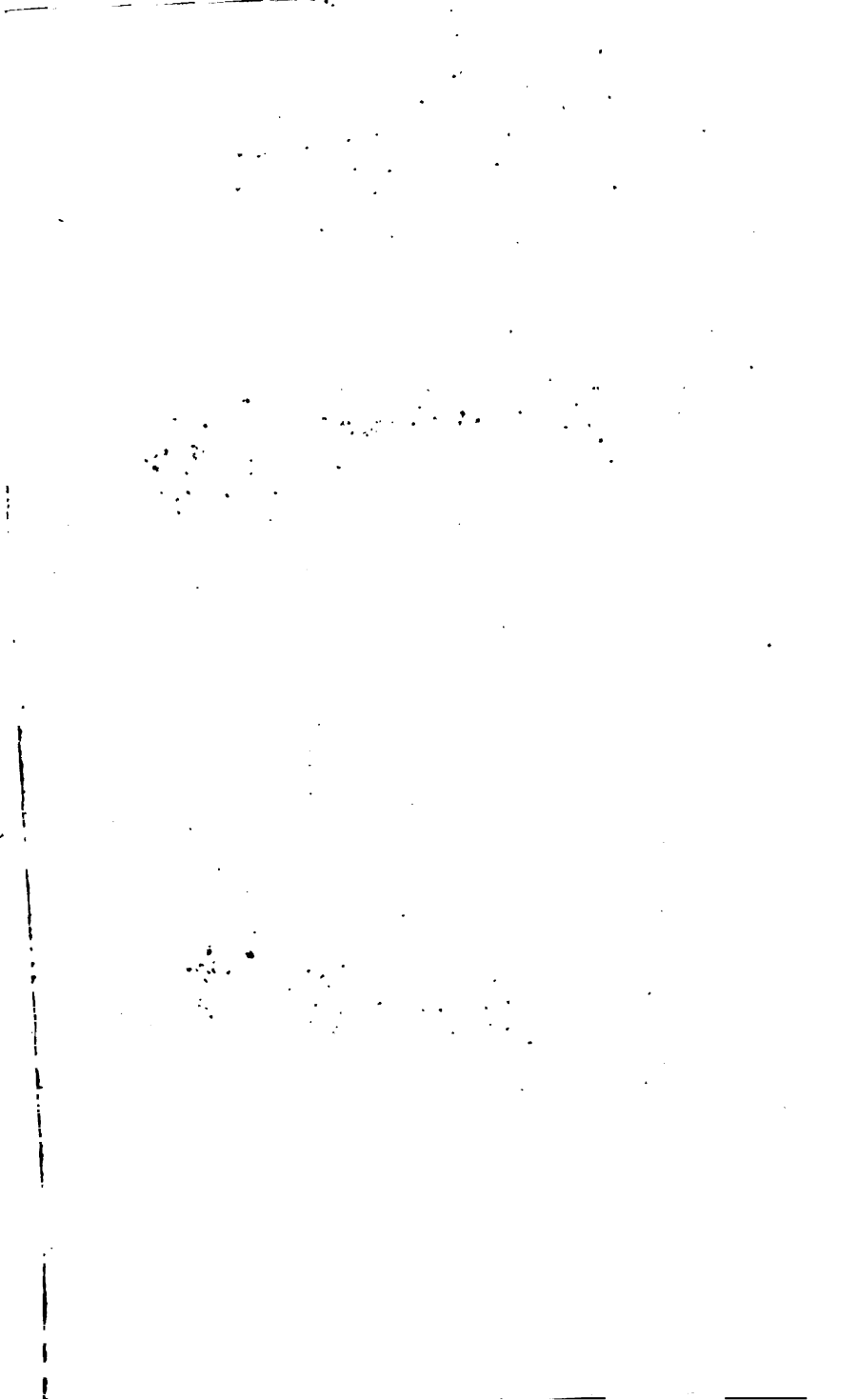
CANCELLED



3000 19208N

21







MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

ENGRAVED BY S. FREEMAN FROM A PICTURE BY JOHN LUCAS, PAINTED 17 APRIL 1858.

1105

THE LIFE;

∴  $\frac{1}{2} \frac{d}{dt} \left( \frac{1}{2} \frac{d}{dt} \right)$

**FEET.**

1857.



ENGRAVED B'

RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
A LITERARY LIFE;

OR,  
BOOKS, PLACES, AND PEOPLE.

BY MARY RUSSELL MITFORD,

AUTHOR OF  
"OUR VILLAGE," "BELFORD REGIS," &c.

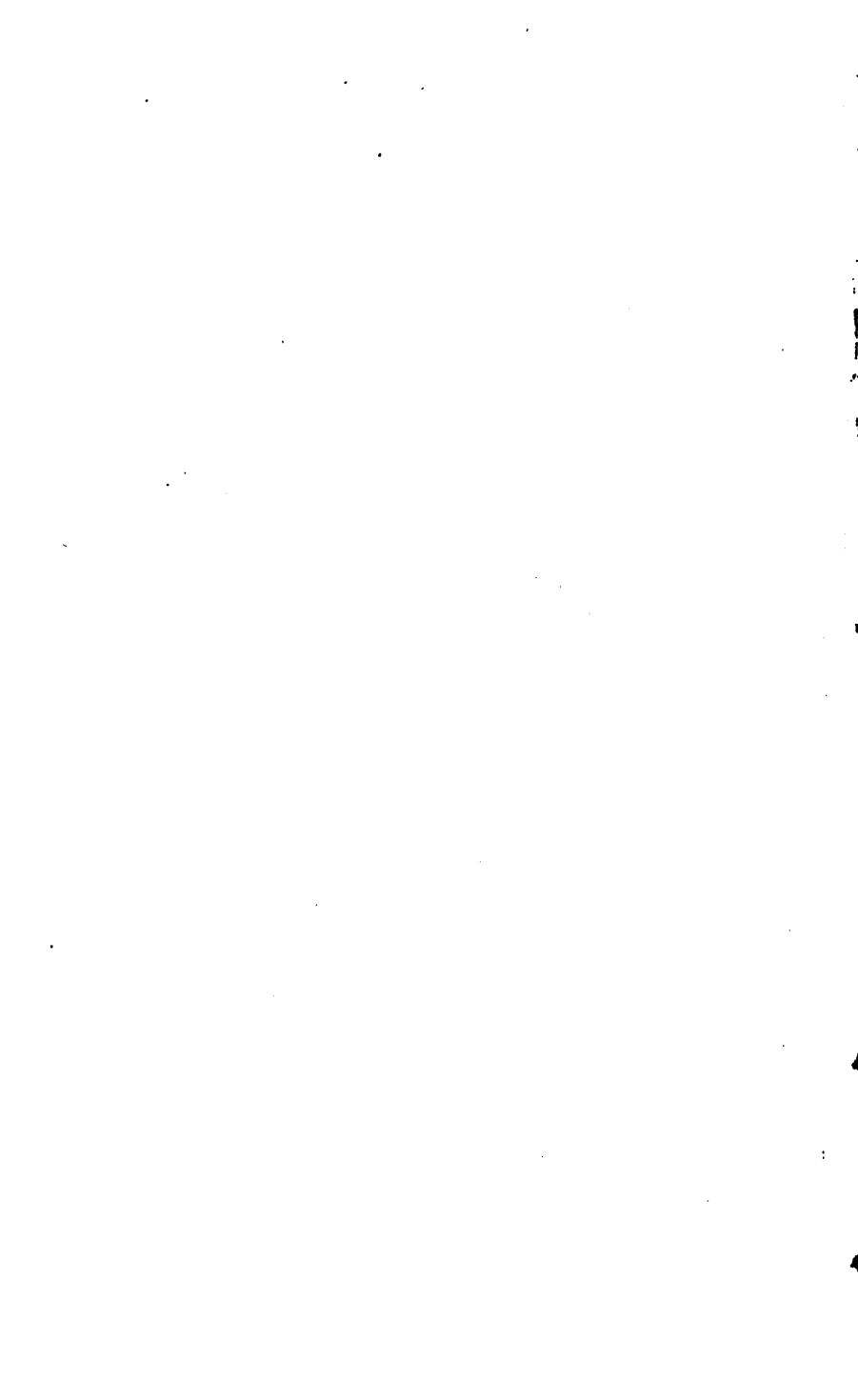
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

*NEW EDITION.*

LONDON:  
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.  
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1857.



TO  
HENRY F. CHORLEY, ESQ.

---

MY DEAR FRIEND,

BUT for you this book would never have existed. It has been to me throughout a source of great gratification. As I wrote line after line of our fine old Poets, many a cherished scene and many a happy hour seemed to live again in my memory and my heart. But no higher pleasure can it afford me, than the opportunity of expressing to you my sincere respect and admiration for talent, especially dramatic talent not even yet sufficiently known, and for innumerable personal qualities worth all the talent in the world.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

SWALLOWFIELD, NEAR READING,  
DECEMBER, 1851.





## P R E F A C E.

---

THE title of this Book gives a very imperfect idea of the contents. Perhaps it would be difficult to find a short phrase that would accurately describe a work so desultory and so wayward ; a work where there is far too much of personal gossip and of local scene-painting for the grave pretension of critical essays, and far too much of criticism and extract for anything approaching in the slightest degree to autobiography.

The courteous reader must take it for what it is :—an attempt to make others relish a few favourite writers as heartily as I have relished them myself. My opinions, such as they are, have at least the merit of being honest, earnest, and individual, unbiassed by the spirit of coterie or the influence of fashion. Many of my extracts will be found to comprise the best bits of neglected authors ; and some, I think, as the noble murder speech of Daniel Webster, the poems of Thomas Davis, of Mrs. James Gray, of Mr. Darley, of Mr. Noel, and of Dr. Holmes, will be new to the English

public. Some again, as the delightful pleasantries of *Praed*, and *Frere*, and *Catherine Fanshawe* are difficult, if not impossible to procure; and others possess in perfection the sort of novelty which belongs to the forgotten. Amongst these I may class "*Holcroft's Memoirs*," "*Richardson's Correspondence*," the curious "*Trial of Captain Goodere*," and the "*Pleader's Guide*." I even fear that the choicest morsels of my book, the delicious specimens of *Cowley's* prose, may come under the same category. Ah! I wish I were as sure of my original matter as I am of my selections.

It is right to say that a few of these papers (like the first volume of my earliest prose work "*Our Village*") have appeared in an obscure Journal.

SWALLOWFIELD, NEAR READING,  
DECEMBER, 1851.

# CONTENTS

OF

## THE FIRST VOLUME.

---

I.—VARIOUS AUTHORS.	Page
MY EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS.—PERCY'S RELIQUES . . . . .	1
II.—IRISH AUTHORS.	
THOMAS DAVIS—JOHN BANIM . . . . .	18
III.—AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.	
VISIT TO TAPLOW.—THOMAS NOEL . . . . .	21
IV.—OLD AUTHORS.	
ABRAHAM COWLEY . . . . .	45
V.—COMIC POETS.	
A WET MORNING.—J. ANSTEY . . . . .	66
VI.—AMERICAN POETS.	
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW . . . . .	78
VII.—AUTHORS SPRUNG FROM THE PEOPLE.	
THOMAS HOLCROFT . . . . .	89
VIII.—AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.	
SITTING IN THE LANE.—BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER . . . . .	114
IX.—FASHIONABLE POETS.	
WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED . . . . .	128
X.—PEASANT POETS.	
JOHN CLARE . . . . .	147

XI.—AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.	
A COUNTRY WEDDING.—FIRST VISIT TO LONDON.—SAMUEL JOHNSON . . . . .	Page 163
XII.—OLD POETS.	
ROBERT HERRICK—GEORGE WITHERS . . . . .	185
XIII.—FEMALE POETS.	
JOANNA BAILLIE—CATHERINE FANSHAWE . . . . .	197
XIV.—MARRIED POETS.	
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING—ROBERT BROWNING . . . . .	218
XV.—PROSE PASTORALS.	
THE LOST CANE.—SIR PHILIP SYDNEY'S ARCADIA—ISAAC WALTON'S COMPLETE ANGLER . . . . .	239
XVI.—SPANISH BALLADS . . . . .	
266	
XVII.—FEMALE POETS.	
AN ADVENTURE AT WILLIAM COBBETT'S.—MISS BLAMIRE.—MRS. JAMES GRAY . . . . .	282
XVIII.—AMERICAN ORATORS.	
DANIEL WEBSTER . . . . .	300
XIX.—OLD AUTHORS.	
BEN JONSON . . . . .	318
XX.—FASHIONABLE POETS.	
WILLIAM ROBERT SPENCER.—A SCHOOL-DAY ANECDOTE . . . . .	327
XXI.—AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DRAMATIC AUTHORS.	
PASSION FOR THE DRAMA.—COLLEY CIBBER—RICHARD CUMBERLAND . . . . .	343
XXII.—FEMALE POETS.	
MRS. CLIVE—MRS. ACTON TINDAL—MISS DAY—MRS. ROBERT DERING . . . . .	363

# RECOLLECTIONS

OF

## A LITERARY LIFE.

---

### I.

#### VARIOUS AUTHORS.

##### MY EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS.

##### PERCY'S RELIQUES.

I NEVER take up these three heavily-bound volumes, the actual first edition, at which Dr. Johnson was wont to scoff, without feeling a pleasure quite apart from that excited by the charming book itself; although to that book, far more than to any modern school of minstrelsy, we owe the revival of the taste for romantic and lyrical poetry, which had lain dormant since the days of the Commonwealth.

This pleasure springs from a very simple cause—the association of these ballads with the happiest days of my happy childhood.

In common with many only children, especially where the mother is of a grave and home-loving nature, I learned to read at a very early age. Before I was three years old my father would perch me on the breakfast-table to exhibit my one accomplishment to some admiring guest, who admired all the more, because, a small puny child, looking far younger than I really was, nicely dressed, as only children generally

are, and gifted with an affluence of curls, I might have passed for the twin sister of my own great doll. On the table was I perched to read some Foxite newspaper, "Courier," or "Morning Chronicle," the Whiggish oracles of the day, and as my delight in the high-seasoned politics of sixty years ago was naturally less than that of my hearers, this display of precocious acquirement was commonly rewarded, not by cakes or sugar-plums, too plentiful in my case to be very greatly cared for, but by a sort of payment in kind. I read leading articles to please the company; and my dear mother recited the "Children in the Wood" to please me. This was my reward; and I looked for my favourite ballad after every performance, just as the piping bullfinch that hung in the window looked for his lump of sugar after going through "God save the King." The two cases were exactly parallel.

One day it happened that I was called upon to exhibit, during some temporary absence of the dear mamma, and cried out amain for the ditty that I loved. My father, who spoiled me, did not know a word of it, but he hunted over all the shelves till he had found the volumes, that he might read it to me himself; and then I grew unreasonable in my demand, and coaxed, and kissed, and begged that the book might be given to my maid Nancy, that she might read it to me whenever I chose. And (have I not said that my father spoilt me?) I carried my point, and the three volumes were actually put in charge of my pretty neat maid, Nancy, (in those days nursery-governesses were not,) and she, waxing weary of the "Children in the Wood," gradually took to

reading to me some of the other ballads ; and as from three years old I grew to four or five, I learned to read them myself, and the book became the delight of my childhood, as it is now the solace of my age. Ah, well-a-day ! sixty years have passed, and I am an old woman, whose nut-brown hair has turned to white ; but I never see that heavily-bound copy of "Percy's Reliques" without the home of my infancy springing up before my eyes.

A pleasant home, in truth, it was. A large house in a little town of the north of Hampshire,—a town, so small that but for an ancient market, very slenderly attended, nobody would have dreamt of calling it anything but a village. The breakfast-room where I first possessed myself of my beloved ballads, was a lofty and spacious apartment, literally lined with books, which, with its Turkey carpet, its glowing fire, its sofas and its easy chairs, seemed, what indeed it was, a very nest of English comfort. The windows opened on a large old-fashioned garden, full of old-fashioned flowers, stocks, roses, honeysuckles, and pinks ; and that again led into a grassy orchard, abounding with fruit-trees, a picturesque country church with its yews and lindens on one side, and beyond, a down as smooth as velvet, dotted with rich islands of coppice, hazel, woodbine, hawthorn, and holly reaching up into the young oaks, and overhanging flowery patches of primroses, wood-sorrel, wild hyacinths and wild strawberries. On the side opposite the church, in a hollow fringed with alders and bulrushes, gleamed the bright clear lakelet, radiant with swans and water-lilies, which the simple townsfolk were content to call the Great Pond.

What a playground was that orchard ! and what playfellows were mine ! Nancy, with her trim prettiness, my own dear father, handsomest and cheerfullest of men, and the great Newfoundland dog Coe, who used to lie down at my feet, as if to invite me to mount him, and then to prance off with his burthen, as if he enjoyed the fun as much as we did. Happy, happy days ! It is good to have the memory of such a childhood ! to be able to call up past delights by the mere sight and sound of Chevy Chase or the Battle of Otterbourne.

And as time wore on the fine ballad of "King Estmere," according to Bishop Percy, one of the most ancient in the collection, got to be amongst our prime favourites. Absorbed by the magic of the story, the old English never troubled us. I hope it will not trouble my readers. We, a little child, and a young country maiden, the daughter of a respectable Hampshire farmer, were no bad representatives in point of cultivation of the noble dames and their attendant damsels who had so often listened with delight to wandering minstrels in bower and hall. In one point, we had probably the advantage of them ; we could read, and it is most likely that they could not. For the rest every age has its own amusements ; and these metrical romances, whether said or sung, may be regarded as equivalent in their day to the novels and operas of ours.

KYNG ESTMERE.

Hearken to me, gentlemen,  
Come, and you shall heare ;  
I'll tell you of two of the boldest brethren  
That ever born y-were.



The tone of them was Adler yonge,  
The tother was King Estmere;  
They were as bolde men in their deedes,  
As any were far and neare.

As they were drinking ale and wine,  
Within Kyng Estmere's halle;  
"When will ye marry a wyfe brother;  
A wyfe to gladd us alle?"

Then bespake him, Kyng Estmere,  
And answered him hastilee:  
"I knowe not that ladye in any lande,  
That is able to marry with me."

"King Adland hath a daughter, brother,  
Men call her bright and sheene;  
If I were kyng here in your stead,  
That ladye sholde be queen."

Sayes, "Reade me, reade me, deare brother,  
Throughout merry England;  
Where we might find a messenger,  
Betweene us two to send?"

Sayes, "You shal ryde yourself, brother,  
I'll bear you companée;  
Many through false messengers are deceived,  
And I feare lest soe sholde we."

Thus they renisht them to ryde,  
Of twoe good renisht steedes,  
And when they come to Kyng Adland's halle,  
Of red golde shone their weedes.

And when they come to Kyng Adland's halle,  
Before the goodlye yate  
There they found good Kyng Adland,  
Rearing himself thereatt.

"Now Christe thee save, good Kyng Adland,  
Nowe Christe thee save and see!"  
Said "You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,  
Right heartily unto me."

"You have a daughter," said Adler yonge,  
 "Men call her bright and sheene,  
 My brother wold marry her to his wyfe,  
 Of England to be queene."

"Yesterday was at my deare daughter,  
 Syr Bremor the Kyng of Spayne :  
 And then she nicked him of naye,  
 I feare she'll do you the same."

"The Kyng of Spayn is a foule paynim,  
 And 'lieveth on Mahound ;  
 And pitye it were that fayre ladye,  
 Shold marry a heathen hound."

"But grant to me," says Kyng Estmere,  
 "For my love I you praye,  
 That I may see your daughter deare,  
 Before I goe hence awaye."

"Although itt is seven yeare and more  
 Syth my daughter was in halle,  
 She shall come downe once for your sake,  
 To glad my gwestes all."

Down then came that mayden fayre,  
 With ladyes laced in pall,  
 And half a hundred of bolde knightes,  
 To bring her from bowre to halle ;  
 And eke as many gentle squieres,  
 To waite upon them all.

[Scott has almost literally copied the four last lines of this stanza in the first canto of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." One of the many obligations that we owe to these old unknown poets, is the inspiration that Sir Walter drew from them, an inspiration to be traced almost as frequently in his prose, as in his verse.]

The talents of golde were on her head sette  
 Hung lowe down to her knee ;  
 And every rynge on her smalle finger  
 Shone of the chrystall free.

Sayes, "Christ you save, my deare madáme ;"

Sayes, "Christ you save and see !"

Sayes, "Yon be welcome, Kyng Estmere,

Right welcome unto me.

"And iff you love me as you saye,

So well and heartilée ;

All that ever you are comen about,

Soone sped now itt may bee."

Then bespake her father deare :

"My daughter, I saye naye ;

Remember well the Kyng of Spayn,

What he sayd yesterdays.

"He wolde pull down my halles and castles.

And reeve me of my lyfe ;

And ever I feare that paynim kyng,

If I reeve him of his wyfe."

"Your castles and your towres, father,

Are stronglye built aboute ;

And therefore of that foul paynim,

Wee neede not stande in doubte.

"Plyghte me your troth nowe, Kyng Estmere,

By Heaven and your righte hande,

That you will marrye me to your wyfe,

And make me queen of your lande."

Then Kyng Estmere, he plight his troth,

By Heaven and his right hand,

That he would marrye her to his wyfe,

And make her queen of his lande.

And he tooke leave of that ladye fayre,

To go to his own contree ;

To fetch him dukes, and lordes, and knightes,

That married they might be.

They had not ridden scant a myle,

A myle forthe of the towne,

But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,

With kempes many a one.

But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,  
 With many a grimm barōne  
 Tone day to marrye Kyng Adland's daughter,  
 Tother day to carrye her home.

Then she sent after Kyng Estmere,  
 In all the spede might bee,  
 That he must either returne and fighte,  
 Or goe home and lose his ladye.

One whyle then the page he went,  
 Another whyle he ranne ;  
 Till he had o'ertaken Kyng Estmere,  
 I wis he never blanne.

" Tydings! tydings! King Estmere !"

" What tydings nowe, my boye ?"

" Oh, tydings I can tell to you,  
 That will you sore annoye.

" You had not ridden scant a myle,  
 A myle out of the towne,  
 But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,  
 With kempés many a one.

" But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,  
 With many a bold barōne  
 Tone day to marrye Kyng Adland's daughter,  
 Tother day to carry her home.

" That ladye faire she greetes you well,  
 And evermore well, by me :  
 You must either turne again and fighte,  
 Or goe home and lose your ladye."

Sayes, " Reade me, reade me, deare brother,  
 My reade shall ryde at thee,  
 Which waye we best may turne and fighte,  
 To save this fayre ladye ?"

" Now hearken to me," sayes Adler yonge,  
 And your reade must rise at me,  
 I quicklye will devise a waye,  
 To sette thy ladye free.

" My mother was a western woman,  
And learned in gramaryé,  
And when I learned at the schole,  
Something she taught itt me.

" There groweth an hearbe within this felde,  
And iff it were but known,  
His color which is whyte and redde,  
It will make blacke and browne.

" His color which is browne and blacke,  
It will make redde and whyte ;  
That sworde is not all Englande,  
Upon his coate will byte.

" And you shall be a harper, brother,  
Out of the north countrée ;  
And I'll be your boye so faine of fighte,  
To beare your harpe by your knee.

" And you shall be the best harper,  
That ever took harp in hand,  
And I will be the best singer,  
That ever songe in the land.

" It shal be written in our forheads,  
All and in gramaryé,  
That we twoe are the boldest men,  
That are in all Christentye."

And thus they renisht them to ryde,  
On twoe good renisht steedes,  
And when they came to Kyng Adland's halle,  
Of redd gold shone their weedes.

And when they came to Kyng Adland's halle,  
Untill the fayre hall yate,  
There they found a proud portér,  
Rearing himselfe thereatt.

Sayes, " Christ thee save, thou proud portér,"  
Sayes, " Christ thee save and see."

" Now you be welcome," sayd the portér,  
" Of what land soever ye be."

"We been harpers," sayd Adler yonge,  
"Come out of the north countrée ;  
We been come hither untill this place,  
This proud wedding fer to see."

Sayd, "An your color were whyte and redd,  
As it is blacke and browne,  
I'd say Kyng Estmere and his brother,  
Were comen untill this towne."

Then they pulled out a ryng of gold,  
Layd it on the porter's arme,  
"And ever we will thee proud portér,  
Thou wilt say us no harme."

Sore he looked on Kyng Estmere,  
And sore he handled the ryng,  
Then opened to them the fayre hall yates,  
He lett for no kind of thyng.

Kyng Estmere he light off his steede,  
Up at the fayre hall board ;  
The frothe that came from his bridle bitte,  
Light on Kyng Bremor's beard.

Sayes, "Stable thy steede, thou proud harpér,  
Go stable him in the stalle ;  
It doth not become a proud harpér,  
To stable him in a kyng's halle."

"My ladde he is so lithér," he sayd,  
"He will do nought that's meete,  
And aye that I could but find the man,  
Were able him to beate."

"Thou speakest proud wordes," sayd the paynim kyng,  
"Thou harper, here to me ;  
There is a man within this halle,  
That will beate thy ladd and thee."

"O lett that man come down," he sayd,  
"A sight of him wolde I see,  
And when he hath beaten well my ladd,  
Then he shall beate of mee."

Down then came the kemperye-man,  
And looked him in the eare,  
For all the golde that was under heaven,  
He durst not neigh him neare.

"And how nowe, kempe," sayd the Kyng of Spayn,  
"And now what aileth thee?"  
He sayes, "It is writen in his forehead,  
All, and in gramarye,  
That for alle the golde that is under heaven,  
I dare not neigh him nye."

Kyng Estmere then pulled forth his harpe,  
And played thereon so sweete,  
Upstarte the ladye from the kyng,  
As he sate att the meate.

"Now staye thy harpe, thou proud harpér,  
Now staye thy harpe I saye;  
For an thou playest as thou beginnest,  
Thou'lt till my bride awaye."

He struck upon his harpe agayne,  
And playde both fair and free;  
The ladye was so pleased therewith,  
She laughed loud laughers three.

"Now sell me thy harpe," said the Kyng of Spayn,  
"Thy harpe and stryngs eche one,  
And as many gold nobles thou shalt have,  
As there be stryngs thereon."

"And what wolde ye doe with my harpe?" he sayd,  
"If I did sell it yee?"—  
"To playe my wyfe and I a fitt,  
When we together be."

"Nowe sell me, Sir Kyng, thy bryde soe gay,  
As she sits laced in pall,  
And as many gold nobles I will give,  
As there be ryngs in the hall."

"And what wolde ye doe with my bryde soe gay  
Iff I did sell her yee?"—

"More seemly it is for that fair ladye  
To wed with me than thee."

He played agayne both loud and shrille,  
And Adler he did syng ;

"O ladye, this is thy owne true love,  
No harper, but a kyng.

"O ladye, this is thy owne true love,  
As playnlye thou mayst see ;  
And I'll rid thee of that foul paynim,  
Who parts thy love and thee."

The ladye lookt and the lady blusht,  
And blusht and lookt agayne,  
While Adler he hath drawn his brande,  
And hath Sir Bremor slayne.

Up then rose the kemperye men,  
And loud they gan to crye :  
"Ah, traytors ! yee have slayne our kyng,  
And therefore ye shall dye."

Kyng Estmere threwe the harpe asyde,  
And swith he drew his brand ;  
And Estmere he, and Adler yonge,  
Right stiff in stour can stand.

And aye their swordes soe sore can byte,  
Through help of gramarye,  
That soon they have slayne the kemperye men,  
Or forst them forth to flee.

King Estmere took that fayre ladye,  
And married her to his wyfe,  
And brought her home to merry England,  
With her to leade his lyfe.

I must not, however, attempt to quote more of those fine old ballads here : the feuds of the Percy and the Douglas would take up too much space ;



so would the Loves of King Arthur's Court, and the Adventures of Robin Hood. Even the story of the Heir of Lynne must remain untold; and I must content myself with two of the shortest and least hacknied poems in a book that for great and varied interest can hardly be surpassed. "The Lie," is said to have been written by Sir Walter Raleigh the night before his execution. That it was written at that exact time is pretty well disproved by the date of its publication in "Davidson's Poems," before Sir Walter's death; it is even uncertain that Raleigh was the author; but that it is of that age is beyond all doubt; so is its extraordinary beauty—a beauty quite free from the conceits which deform too many of our finest old lyrics.

Go, Soul, the body's guest,  
 Upon a thankless errand;  
 Fear not to touch the best,  
 The truth shall be thy warrant.  
 Go, since I needs must die,  
 And give the world the lie.

Go tell the Court it glows  
 And shines like rotten wood;  
 Go tell the Church it shows  
 Men's good, and doth no good:  
 If Church and Court reply,  
 Then give them both the lie.

Tell potentates they live  
 Acting by others' actions,  
 Not loved unless they give,  
 Not strong but by their factions:  
 If potentates reply,  
 Give potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition  
That rule affairs of state,  
Their purpose is ambition,  
Their practice only hate :  
And if they once reply,  
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most,  
They beg for more by spending,  
Who in their greatest cost  
Seek nothing but commending :  
And if they make reply,  
Spare not to give the lie.

Tell zeal it lacks devotion ;  
Tell love it is but lust ;  
Tell time it is but motion ;  
Tell flesh it is but dust ;  
And wish them not reply,  
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth ;  
Tell honour how it alters ;  
Tell beauty how she blasteth ;  
Tell favour how she falters ;  
And as they shall reply,  
Give each of them the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles  
In fickle points of niceness ;  
Tell wisdom she entangles  
Herself in over-wiseness :  
And if they do reply,  
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell physic of her boldness ;  
Tell skill it is pretension ;  
Tell charity of coldness ;  
Tell law it is contention :  
And as they yield reply,  
So give them still the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindness ;  
 Tell nature of decay ;  
 Tell friendship of unkindness ;  
 Tell justice of delay :  
     And if they dare reply,  
     Then give them all the lie.  
 Tell arts they have no soundness,  
     But vary by esteeming ;  
 Tell schools they want profoundness,  
     And stand too much on seeming :  
     If arts and schools reply,  
     Give arts and schools the lie.  
 Tell faith it's fled the city ;  
     Tell how the country erreth ;  
 Tell, manhood shakes off pity ;  
     Tell, virtue least preferreth :  
     And if they do reply,  
     Spare not to give the lie.  
 So when thou hast, as I  
     Commandeth thee, done blabbing,  
 Although to give the lie  
     Deserves no less than stabbing,  
     Yet stab at thee who will,  
     No stab the soul can kill.

## WINIFREDA.

About the authorship of this beautiful address to conjugal love, there is also much uncertainty. Bishop Percy calls it a "Translation from the Antient British," probably to veil the real writer. We find it included among Gilbert Cooper's poems, a diamond amongst pebbles ; he never could have written it. It has been claimed for Steevens, who did the world good service as one of the earliest restorers of Shakespeare's text ; but who is almost as famous for his bitter and cynical temper, as for his acuteness as a verbal critic. Could this charming love-song, true in

its tenderness as the gushing notes of a bird to his sitting mate, have been poured forth by a man whom the whole world agreed in hating? After all, we have no need to meddle with this vexèd question. Let us be content to accept thankfully one of the very few purely English ballads which contradict the reproach of our Scottish and Irish neighbours, when they tell us that our love-songs are of the head, not of the heart. This poem, at least, may vie with those of Gerald Griffin in the high and rare merit of conveying the noblest sentiments in the simplest language.

Away! let nought to love displeasing,  
My Winifreda, move your care ;  
Let nought delay the heavenly blessing,  
Nor squeamish pride, nor gloomy fear.

What though no grant of royal donors  
With pompous titles grace our blood?  
We'll shine in more substantial honours,  
And to be noble we'll be good.

Our name, while virtue thus we tender,  
Shall sweetly sound where'er 'tis spoke ;  
And all the great ones, they shall wonder  
How they respect such little folk.

What though from fortune's lavish bounty  
No mighty treasures we possess?  
We'll find within our pittance plenty,  
And be content without excess.

Still shall each kind returning season  
Sufficient for our wishes give ;  
For we will live a life of reason,  
And that's the only life to live.

Through youth to age in love excelling,  
We'll hand in hand together tread ;  
Sweet-smiling Peace shall crown our dwelling,  
And babes, sweet-smiling babes, our bed,

How should I love the pretty creatures,  
While round my knees they fondly clung ;  
To see them look their mother's features,  
To hear them lisp their mother's tongue.

And when with envy, time transported,  
Shall think to rob us of our joys,  
You'll in your girls again be courted,  
And I'll go wooing in my boys.

Surely this is the sort of poetry that ought to be popular—to be sung in our concert-rooms, and set to such airs as should be played on barrel-organs through our streets, suggesting the words and the sentiments as soon as the first notes of the melody make themselves heard under the window.

## II.

## IRISH AUTHORS.

THOMAS DAVIS—JOHN BANIM.

CONSIDERING his immense reputation in the Sister Island, the name of Thomas Davis has hardly found its due place in our literature. He was an Irish barrister; the most earnest, the most vehement, the most gifted, and the most beloved of the Young Ireland party. Until the spring of 1840, when he was in his twenty-sixth year, he had only been remarkable for extreme good-nature, untiring industry, and very varied learning. At that period he blazed forth at once as a powerful and brilliant political writer, produced an eloquent and admirable "Life of Curran," became one of the founders of the "Nation" newspaper, and carried his zeal in the cause of nationality to such excess, that he actually proposed to publish a weekly journal in the Irish tongue—an impracticable scheme, which happily ended in talk.

To the newspaper which was established, and which the young patriots condescended to write in the language—to use their own phrase—of the Saxons, we owe the beautiful lyrics of Thomas Davis. The editor of the "Nation" had faith in the well-known saying of Fletcher of Saltoun, "Give me the writing of the

ballads, and let who will make the laws;" and in default of other aid, the regular contributors to the new journal resolved to attempt the task themselves. It is difficult to believe, but the editor of his poems dwells upon it as a well-known fact, that up to this time the author of "The Sack of Baltimore" had never written a line of verse in his life, and was, indeed, far less sanguine than his coadjutors in the success of the experiment. How completely *he* succeeded there is no need to tell, although nearly all that he has written was the work of one hurried year, thrown off in the midst of a thousand occupations, and a thousand claims. A very few years more, and his brief and bright career was cut short by a sudden illness, which carried him rapidly to the grave, beloved and lamented by his countrymen of every sect and of every party :

"His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes :  
                                \*     \*     \*         He had kept  
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept."

Oh! that he had lived to love Ireland, not better, but more wisely, and to write volumes upon volumes of such lyrics as the two first which I transcribe, such biographies as his "Life of Curran," and such criticism as his "Essay upon Irish Song!"

I will deal more tenderly than he would have done with printer and reader, by giving them as little as I can of his beloved Cymric words (such is the young Irish name for the old Irish language); and by sparing them altogether his beloved Cymric character, which I have before my eyes at this moment, looking exactly like a cross between Arabic and Chinese.

## THE SACK OF BALTIMORE.

Baltimore is a small seaport, in the barony of Carbery, in South Munster. It grew up round a castle of O'Driscoll's, and was, after his ruin, colonized by the English. On the 20th of June, 1631, the crew of two Algerine galleys landed in the dead of the night, sacked the town, and bore off into slavery all who were not too old or too young, or too fierce, for their purpose. The pirates were steered up the intricate channel by one Hackett, a Dungarvon fisherman, whom they had taken at sea for that office. Two years after he was convicted and executed for the crime.

The summer sun is falling soft on Carbery's hundred isles ;  
The summer sun is gleaming still through Gabriel's rough  
    defiles ;  
Old Inisherkin's crumbled fane looks like a moulting bird ;  
And in a calm and sleepy swell the ocean-tide is heard ;  
The hookers lie upon the beach ; the children cease their play ;  
The gossips leave the little inn ; the households kneel to pray ;  
And full of love and peace and rest, its daily labour o'er  
Upon that cosy creek there lay the town of Baltimore.

A deeper rest, a starry trance, has come with midnight there,  
No sound, except that throbbing wave in earth or sea or air ;  
The massive capes and ruined towers seem conscious of the  
    calm ;  
The fibrous sod and stunted trees are breathing heavy balm,  
So still the night, those two long barques round Dunashad that  
    glide,  
Must trust their oars, methinks not few, against the ebbing tide ;  
Oh ! some sweet mission of true love must urge them to the  
    shore,  
They bring some lover to his bride, who sighs in Baltimore.



All, all asleep within each roof along that rocky street,  
And these must be the lover's friends, with gently gliding feet ;—  
A stifled gasp ! a dreamy noise !—"The roof is in a flame !"   
From out their beds and to their doors rush maid and sire and  
dame,

And meet upon the threshold-stone, the gleaming sabre's fall,  
And o'er each black and bearded face the white or crimson shawl ;  
The yell of "Allah !" breaks above the prayer and shriek and  
roar—

Oh, blessed God ! the Algerine is lord of Baltimore !

Then flung the youth his naked hand against the shearing sword ;  
Then sprang the mother on the brand with which her son was  
gored ;

Then sank the grandsire on the floor, his grand-babes clutching  
wild ;

Then fled the maiden, moaning faint, and nestled with the child.  
But see yon pirate strangled lies and crushed with splashing  
heel,

While o'er him, in an Irish hand, there sweeps his Syrian steel.  
Though virtue sink, and courage fail, and misers yield their  
store,

There's *one* hearth well avenged in the sack of Baltimore !

Midsummer morn, in woodland nigh, the birds begin to sing,  
They see not now the milking maids—deserted is the spring !  
Midsummer day, this gallant rides from distant Bandon's town,  
Those hookers crossed from stormy Skull, that skiff from  
Affadown.

They only found the smoking walls with neighbours' blood  
besprent,

And on the strowed and trampled beach awhile they wildly went,  
Then dashed to sea, and passed Cape Clear, and saw five leagues  
before,

The pirate galleys vanishing that ravaged Baltimore.

Oh ! some must tug the galley's oar and some must tend the  
steed,

This boy will bear a Scheik's chibouk, and that a Bey's jerreed.  
Oh ! some are for the arsenals by beauteous Dardanelles,  
And some are in the caravan to Mecca's sandy dells.

The maid that Bandon gallant sought is chosen for the Day ;  
She's safe ! she's dead ! she stabbed him in the midst of his  
serai !

And, when to die a death of fire, that noble maid they bore,  
She only smiled—O'Driscoll's child !—she thought of Baltimore.

'Tis two long years since sank the town beneath that bloody  
band,

And all around its trampled hearths a larger concourse stand,  
Where, high upon a gallows tree, a yelling wretch is seen,  
'Tis Hackett of Dungarvon, he who steered the Algerine.  
He fell amid a sullen shout, with scarce a passing prayer,  
For he had slain the kith and kin of many a hundred there.  
Some muttered of MacMurchadh, who had brought the Norman  
o'er ;

Some cursed him with Iscariot, that day in Baltimore.

The more we study this ballad, the more extraordinary does it appear, that it should have been the work of an unpractised hand. Not only is it full of spirit and of melody, qualities not incompatible with inexperience in poetical composition, but the artistic merit is so great. Picture succeeds to picture, each perfect in itself, and each conducing to the effect of the whole. There is not a careless line, or a word out of place ; and how the epithets paint : "fibrous sod," "heavy balm," "shearing sword !" The Oriental portion is as complete in what the French call local colour as the Irish. He was learned, was Thomas Davis, and wrote of nothing that he could not have taught. It is something that he should have left a poem like this, altogether untinged by party politics, for the pride and admiration of all who share a common language, whether Celt or Saxon.

MAIRE BHAN ASTOIR\*—"FAIR MARY MY TREASURE."

IRISH EMIGRANT SONG.

In a valley far away,  
With my Maire bhan astoir,  
Short would be the summer day,  
Ever loving more and more.  
Winter days would all grow long  
With the light her heart would pour,  
With her kisses and her song  
And her loving maith go léor.†  
Fond is Maire bhan astoir,  
Fair is Maire bhan astoir,  
Sweet as ripple on the shore  
Sings my Maire bhan astoir.

Oh! her sire is very proud,  
And her mother cold as stone;  
But her brother bravely vowed  
She should be my bride alone;  
For he knew I loved her well,  
And he knew she loved me too,  
So he sought their pride to quell,  
But 'twas all in vain to sue.  
True is Maire bhan astoir,  
Tried is Maire bhan astoir,  
Had I wings I'd never soar  
From my Maire bhan astoir.

There are lands where manly toil  
Surely reaps the crop it sows,  
Glorious woods and teeming soil  
Where the broad Missouri flows;  
Through the trees the smoke shall rise  
From our hearth with maith go léor,  
There shall shine the happy eyes  
Of my Maire bhan astoir.

---

\* Pronounced Maur-ya Vaun Asthore.

† Much plenty, or in abundance.

Mild is Maire bhan astoir,  
 Mine is Maire bhan astoir,  
 Saints will watch about the door  
 Of my Maire bhan astoir.

I subjoin one of the lyrics, a ballad of the "Brigade," which produced so much effect, when printed on the broad sheet of the "Nation." It is a graphic and dramatic battle-song, full of life and action; too well calculated to excite that most excitable people, for whose gratification it was written.

FONTENOT.

(1745.)

Thrice, at the huts of Fontenoy, the English column failed;  
 And twice, the lines of Saint Antoine, the Dutch in vain  
 assailed;

For town and slope were filled with fort and flanking battery,  
 And well they swept the English ranks and Dutch auxiliary.  
 As vainly through De Barri's wood the British soldiers burst,  
 The French artillery drove them back, diminished and dis-  
 persed.

The bloody Duke of Cumberland beheld with anxious eye,  
 And ordered up his last reserve, his latest chance to try.  
 On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, how fast his generals ride!  
 And mustering come his chosen troops like clouds at eventide.

Six thousand English veterans in stately column tread,  
 Their cannon blaze in front and flank, Lord Hay is at their head.  
 Steady they step adown the slope, steady they mount the hill,  
 Steady they load, steady they fire, moving right onward still,  
 Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy, as through a furnace blast,  
 Through rampart, trench and palisade, and bullets showering  
 fast:

And on the open plain above they rose and kept their course,  
 With ready fire and grim resolve, that mocked at hostile force:  
 Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thinner grow their ranks,  
 They break as breaks the Zuyder Zee through Holland's ocean  
 banks!

More idly than the summer flies, French tirailleurs rush round,  
As stubble to the lava tide, French squadrons strew the ground ;  
Bomb shell and grape and round-shot tore, still on they marched  
and fired ;

Fast, from each volley, grenadier and voltigeur retired.

"Push on, my household cavalry !" King Louis madly cried :  
To death they rush, but rude their shock, not unavenged they  
died.

On, through the camp the column trod, King Louis turned his  
rein :

"Not yet, my liege," Saxe interposed, "the Irish troops remain."  
And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been a Waterloo  
Had not these exiles ready been, fresh, vehement and true.

"Lord Clare," he says, "you have your wish—there are your  
Saxon foes !"

The Marshal almost smiles to see how furiously he goes !  
How fierce the look these exiles wore, who're wont to be so gay !  
The treasured wrongs of fifty years are in their hearts to-day ;  
The treaty broken ere the ink wherein 'twas writ could dry ;  
Their plundered homes, their ruined shrines, their women's  
parting cry ;

Their priesthood hunted down like wolves, their country over-  
thrown ;

Each looks as if revenge for all were staked on him alone.

On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, nor ever yet elsewhere,

Rushed on to fight a nobler band than these proud exiles were.

O'Brien's voice is hoarse with joy, as, halting, he commands,

"Fix bayonets—charge !" Like mountain storm rush on these  
fiery bands !—

Thin is the English column now, and faint their volleys grow,  
Yet, mustering all the strength they have, they make a gallant  
show.

They dress their ranks upon the hill, to face that battle-wind ;  
Their bayonets the breakers' foam ; like rocks the men behind !  
One volley crashes from their line, when through the surging  
smoke,

With empty guns clutched in their hands, the headlong Irish  
broke.

On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, hark to that fierce huzza !  
" Revenge ! remember Limerick ! dash down the Sacsanagh ! "

Like lions leaping at a fold, when mad with hunger's pang,  
Right up against the English line the Irish exiles sprang ;  
Bright was their steel, 'tis bloody now, their guns are filled with  
gore ;  
Through shattered ranks and severed files and trampled flags  
they tore ;  
The English strove with desperate strength, paused, rallied,  
scattered, fled ;  
The green-hill side is matted close with dying and with dead.  
Across the plain and far away passed on that hideous wrack,  
While cavalier and fantassin dash in upon their track.  
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in the sun,  
With bloody plumes the Irish stand : the field is fought and  
won !

John Banim was the founder of that school of Irish novelists, which, always excepting its blameless purity, so much resembles the modern romantic French school, that if it were possible to suspect Messieurs Victor Hugo, Eugène Sue, and Alexandre Dumas of reading the English which they never approach without such ludicrous blunders, one might fancy that many-volumed tribe to have stolen their peculiar inspiration from the O'Hara family. Of a certainty the tales of Mr. Banim were purely original. They had no precursors either in our own language or in any other, and they produced accordingly the sort of impression more vivid than durable which highly-coloured and deeply-shadowed novelty is sure to make on the public mind. But they are also intensely national. They reflect Irish scenery, Irish character, Irish crime, and Irish virtue, with a general truth which in spite of their tendency to melo-dramatic effects, will keep them fresh and life-like for many a

day after the mere fashion of the novel of the season shall be past and gone. The last of his works, especially, "Father Connell," contains the portrait of a parish priest so exquisitely simple, natural, and tender, that in the whole range of fiction I know nothing more charming. The subject was one that the author loved; witness the following rude, rugged, homely song, which explains so well the imperishable ties which unite the peasant to his pastor:—

## SOGGARTH AROON.\*

Am I the slave they say,  
 Soggarth aroon?  
 Since you did show the way,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
*Their* slave no more to be,  
 While they would work with me  
 Ould Ireland's slavery,  
 Soggarth aroon?

Why not her poorest man,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 Try and do all he can,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 Her commands to fulfil  
 Of his own heart and will,  
 Side by side with you still,  
 Soggarth aroon?

Loyal and brave to you,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 Yet be no slave to you,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 Nor out of fear to you  
 Stand up so near to you—  
 Och! out of fear to *you*,  
 Soggarth aroon!

---

\* Anglice, Priest Dear.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF

Who in the winter night,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 When the could blast did bite,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 Came to my cabin-door,  
 And on my earthen floor  
 Knelt by me sick and poor,  
 Soggarth aroon ?

Who on the marriage-day,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 Made the poor cabin gay,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 And did both laugh and sing,  
 Making our hearts to ring  
 At the poor christening,  
 Soggarth aroon ?

Who as friend only met,  
 Soggarth aroon ;  
 Never did flout me yet,  
 Soggarth aroon,  
 And when my hearth was dim,  
 Gave, while his eye did brim,  
 What I should give to him,  
 Soggarth aroon ?

Och ! you, and only you,  
 Soggarth aroon !  
 And for this I was true to you,  
 Soggarth aroon ;  
 In love they'll never shake,  
 When for ould Ireland's sake,  
 We a true part did take,  
 Soggarth aroon !

There is a small and little-known volume of these rough peasant-ballads, full of the same truth and intensity of feeling,—songs which seem destined to be sung at the wakes and patterns of Ireland. But,



to say nothing of his fine classical tragedy of "Damon and Pythias," Mr. Banim, so successful in the delineation of the sweet, delicate, almost idealised girl of the people, has written at least one song that may rival Gerald Griffin in grace and sentiment. A lover sings it to his mistress :—

'Tis not for love of gold I go,  
 'Tis not for love of fame ;  
 Though fortune may her smile bestow,  
 And I may win a name,  
                                     Ailleen ;  
 And I may win a name.

And yet it is for gold I go,  
 And yet it is for fame ;  
 That they may deck another brow,  
 And bless another name,  
                                     Ailleen ;  
 And bless another name.

For this, but this I go—for this  
 I leave thy love awhile,  
 And all the soft and quiet bliss  
 Of thy young faithful smile,  
                                     Ailleen ;  
 Of thy young faithful smile.

And I go to brave a world I hate,  
 And woo it o'er and o'er,  
 And tempt a wave, and try a fate  
 Upon a stranger shore,  
                                     Ailleen ;  
 Upon a stranger shore.

Oh ! when the bays are all my own,  
 I know a heart will care !  
 Oh ! when the gold is sought and won,  
 I know a brow will wear,  
                                     Ailleen ;  
 I know a brow will wear !

And, when with both returned again  
My native land I see,  
I know a smile will meet me then,  
And a hand will welcome me,  
Ailleen ;  
And a hand will welcome me !

Is it not strange that with such ballads as these of John Banim, Thomas Davis, and Gerald Griffin before us, Mr. Moore, that great and undoubted wit, should pass in the highest English circles for the only song-writer of Ireland ? Do people really prefer flowers made of silk and cambric, of gum and wire, the work of human hands however perfect, to such as Mother Earth sends forth in the gushing spring time, full of sap and odour, sparkling with sunshine, and dripping with dew ?

I can find no regular life of our poet ; nothing beyond a chance record of a kind word to one young struggling countryman, and a kind act to another. He died in the vigour of his age ; married, and as I fear, poor. The too frequent story of a man of genius.

## III.

## AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

## VISIT TO TAPLOW.

THOMAS NOEL.

THREE summers ago I spent a few pleasant weeks among some of the loveliest scenery of our great river. The banks of the Thames, always beautiful, are nowhere more delightful than in the neighbourhood of Maidenhead,—one side ramparted by the high, abrupt chalky cliffs of Buckinghamshire; the other edging gently away into our rich Berkshire meadows, chequered with villages, villas, and woods.

My own temporary home was one of singular beauty,—a snug cottage at Taplow, looking over a garden full of honeysuckles, lilies, and roses, to a miniature terrace, whose steps led down into the water, or rather into our little boat; the fine old bridge at Maidenhead just below us; the magnificent woods of Cliefden, crowned with the lordly mansion (now, alas! a second time burnt down), rising high above; and the broad majestic river, fringed with willow and alder, gay with an ever-changing variety—the trim pleasure-yacht, the busy barge, or the punt of the solitary angler, gliding by placidly and slowly, the very image of calm and conscious power. No

pleasanter residence, through the sultry months of July and August, than the Bridge cottage at Taplow!

Besides the natural advantages of the situation, we were within reach of many interesting places, of which we, as strangers, contrived—as strangers usually do—to see a great deal more than the actual residents.

A six-mile drive took us to the lordly towers of Windsor—the most queenly of our palaces—with the adjuncts that so well become the royal residence, St. George's Chapel and Eton College, fitting shrines of learning and devotion! Windsor was full of charm. The ghostly shadow of a tree, that is, or passes for, Herne's oak—for the very man of whom we inquired our way maintained that the tree was apocryphal, although in such cases I hold it wisest and pleasantest to believe—the quaint old town itself, with the localities immortalised by Sir John and Sir Hugh, Dame Quickly and Justice Shallow, and all the company of the Merry Wives, had to me an un-failing attraction. To Windsor we drove again and again, until the pony spontaneously turned his head Windsor-ward.

Then we reviewed the haunts of Gray, the house at Stoke Pogis, and the churchyard where he is buried, and which contains the touching epitaph wherein the pious son commemorates “the careful mother of many children, one of whom only had the misfortune to survive her.” To that spot we drove one bright summer day, and we were not the only visitants. It was pleasant to see one admirer seated under a tree, sketching the church, and another party, escorted by the clergyman, walking reverently through it. Stoke Pogis, however, is not without its rivals;

and we also visited the old church at Upton, whose ivy-mantled tower claims to be the veritable tower of the "Elegy." A very curious scene did that old church exhibit—that of an edifice not yet decayed, but abandoned to decay, an incipient ruin, such as probably might have been paralleled in the monasteries of England after the Reformation, or in the churches of France after the first Revolution. The walls were still standing, still full of monuments and monumental inscriptions; in some the gilding was yet fresh, and one tablet, especially, had been placed there very recently, commemorating the talent and virtues of the celebrated astronomer, Sir John Herschel. But the windows were denuded of their glass, the font broken, the pews dismantled, whilst on the tottering reading-desk one of the great Prayer-books, all mouldy and damp still lay open—last vestige of the holy services with which it once resounded. Another church had been erected, but it looked new and naked, and everybody seemed to regret the old place of worship, the roof of which was remarkable for the purity of its design.\*

Another of our excursions was to Ockwells—a curious and beautiful specimen of domestic architecture in the days before the Tudors. Strange it seems to me that no one has exactly imitated that graceful front, with its steep roof terminated on either side by two projecting gables, the inner one lower than the other, adorned with oak-carving, regular and delicate as that on an ivory fan. The porch has equal ele-

---

\* Since writing this paper, the fine old church in question has been completely restored.

gance. One almost expects to see some baronial hawking party, or some bridal procession, issue from its recesses. The great hall, although its grand open roof has been barbarously closed up, still retains its fine proportions, its dais, its music gallery, and the long range of windows, still adorned with the mottos and escutcheons of the Norreys, their kindred and allies. It has long been used as a farm-house ; and one marvels that the painted windows should have remained uninjured through four centuries of neglect and change. Much that was interesting has disappeared, but enough still remains to gratify those who love to examine the picturesque dwellings of our ancestors. The noble staircase, the iron-studded door, the prodigious lock, the gigantic key (too heavy for a woman to wield), the cloistered passages, the old-fashioned buttery-hatch, give a view not merely of the degree of civilization of the age, but of the habits and customs of familiar daily life.

Another drive took us to the old grounds of Lady Place, where, in demolishing the house, care had been taken to preserve the vaults in which the great Whig leaders wrote and signed the famous letter to William of Orange which drove James the Second from the throne. A gloomy place it is now—a sort of underground ruin—and gloomy enough the patriots must have found it on that memorable occasion ; the tombs of the monks (it had formerly been a monastery) under their feet, the rugged walls around them, and no ray of light, except the lanterns they may have brought with them or the torches which they lit. Surely the signature of that summons which secured the liberties of England would make an impressive

picture — Lord Somers in the foreground, and the other Whig statesmen grouped around him. A Latin inscription records a visit made by George III. to the vaults; and truly it is amongst the places that monarchs would do well to visit — full of stern lessons !

Chief pilgrimage of all was one that lead us first to Beaconsfield, through the delightful lanes of Buckinghamshire, with their luxuriance of hedge-row timber, and their patches of heathy common. There we paid willing homage to all that remained of the habitation consecrated by the genius of Edmund Burke. Little is left, beyond gates and outbuildings, for the house has been burnt down and the grounds disparked ; but still some of his walks remained, and an old well and traces of an old garden—and pleasant it was to tread where such a man had trodden, and to converse with the few who still remembered him. We saw, too, the stalwart yeoman who had the honour, not only of furnishing to Sir Joshua the model of his “*Infant Hercules*,” but even of suggesting the subject. Thus it happened. Passing a few days with Mr. Burke at his favourite retirement, the great painter accompanied his host on a visit to his bailiff. A noble boy lay sprawling in the cradle in the room where they sat. His mother would fain have removed him, but Sir Joshua, then commissioned to paint a picture for the Empress Catherine, requested that the child might remain, sent with all speed for palette and easel, and accomplished his task with that success which so frequently waits upon a sudden inspiration. It is remarkable that the good farmer, whose hearty cordial kindness I shall not soon forget, has kept in a manner

most unusual the promise of his sturdy infancy, and makes as near an approach to the proportions of the fabled Hercules as ever Buckinghamshire yeoman displayed.

Beaconsfield, however, and even the cherished retirement of Burke, was by no means the goal of our pilgrimage. The true shrine was to be found four miles farther, in the small cottage at Chalfont St. Giles, where Milton found a refuge during the Great Plague of London.

The road wound through lanes still shadier and hedgerows still richer, where the tall trees rose from banks overhung with fern, intermixed with spikes of purple foxglove; sometimes broken by a bit of mossy park-paling, sometimes by the light shades of a beech-wood, until at last we reached the quiet and secluded village whose very first dwelling was consecrated by the abode of the great poet.

It is a small tenement of four rooms, one on either side the door, standing in a little garden, and having its gable to the road. A short inscription, almost hidden by the foliage of the vine, tells that Milton once lived within those sacred walls. The cottage has been so seldom visited, is so little desecrated by thronging admirers, and has suffered so little from alteration or decay, and all about it has so exactly the serene and tranquil aspect that one should have expected to see in an English village two centuries ago, that it requires but a slight effort of fancy to image to ourselves the old blind bard still sitting in that little parlour, or sunning himself on the garden-seat beside the well. Milton is said to have corrected at Chalfont some of the sheets of the "Paradise Lost."



The "Paradise Regained" he certainly composed there. One loves to think of him in that calm retreat,—to look round that poor room and think how Genius ennobles all she touches! Heaven forefend that change in any shape, whether of embellishment or of decay, should fall upon that cottage!

Another resort of ours, not a pilgrimage, but a haunt, was the forest of old pollards, known by the name of Burnham Beeches. A real forest it is—six hundred acres in extent, and varied by steep declivities, wild dells, and tangled dingles. The ground, clothed with the fine short turf where the thyme and the harebell love to grow, is partly covered with luxuriant fern; and the juniper and the holly form a fitting underwood for those magnificent trees, hollowed by age, whose profuse canopy of leafy boughs seems so much too heavy for the thin rind by which it is supported. Mr. Grote has a house here on which we looked with reverence; and in one of the loveliest spots we came upon a monument erected by Mrs. Grote in memory of Mendelssohn, and enriched by an elegant inscription from her pen.

We were never weary of wandering among the Burnham Beeches; sometimes taking Dropmore by the way, where the taste of the late Lord Grenville created from a barren heath a perfect Eden of rare trees and matchless flowers. But even better than amid that sweet woodland scene did I love to ramble by the side of the Thames, as it bounded the beautiful grounds of Lord Orkney, or the magnificent demesne of Sir George Warrender, the verdant lawns of Cliefden.

That place also is full of memories. There it was

that the famous Duke of Buckingham fought his no less famous duel with Lord Shrewsbury, whilst the fair countess, dressed rather than disguised, as a page, held the horse of her victorious paramour. We loved to gaze on that princely mansion, repeating to each other the marvellous lines in which our two matchless satirists have immortalized the Duke's follies, and doubting which portrait were the best. We may at least be sure that no third painter will excel them.\* Alas ! who reads Pope or Dryden now ! I am afraid, very much afraid, that to many a fair young reader, these celebrated characters will be as good as manuscript. I will at all events try the experiment. Here they be :

“ In the first rank of these did Zimri stand :

A man so various, that he seemed to be  
Not one, but all mankind's epitome ;  
Stiff in opinion, always in the wrong,  
Was everything by starts and nothing long ;  
But, in the course of one revolving moon,  
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon ;  
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,  
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.  
Blest madman, who could every hour employ  
With something new to wish or to enjoy !”

DRYDEN. *Absalom and Achitophel*.

Now for the little hunchback of Twickenham—

“ In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half hung,  
The walls of plaster, and the floor of dung ;  
On once a flockbed, but repaired with straw,  
With tape-tied curtains never meant to draw,  
The George and Garter dangling from that bed,  
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red :

---

\* And yet they have been almost equalled by a French artist ;  
Count Anthony Hamilton in the *Mémoires de Grammont*.

Great Villiers lies :—but ah, how changed from him,  
 That life of pleasure and that soul of whim,  
 Gallant and gay in Cliefden's proud alcove,  
 The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love !  
 Or just as gay at council 'mid the ring  
 Of mimic statesmen and their merry king !  
 No wit to flatter left of all his store ;  
 No fool to laugh at, which he valued more ;  
 There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends  
 And fame, the lord of useless thousands !”

POPE. *Moral Essays.*

The charming walk at Lord Orkney's, which I was so kindly permitted to enjoy, and which I did enjoy so thoroughly, ran between the noble river shaded and overhung by trees, and the high steep chalky cliff, also clothed with trees to the very summit ; trees of all kinds, the oak, the beech, the ash, the elm, the yew, the cypress, the pine, the juniper. The woodland path, no trimly-kept walk, but a rude narrow cart-track, thridded its way amidst nooks so closely planted and branches so interlaced, that oftentimes the water only glanced upon us by glimpses through the foliage, just as in looking upward we caught a gleam of the blue sky. Sometimes again it was totally hidden, and we only felt the presence of the river by the refreshing coolness of the breeze, and the gentle rippling of the slow current ; while, sometimes, a sudden opening would give to view some rude landing-place where the boats were laden with chalk ; or a vista accidentally formed by the felling of some large tree would show us an old mill across the stream framed in by meeting branches like a picture.

The Taplow spring, with its pretty cottage for pic-nics, often proved the end of our evening walks. I

loved to see the gushing of that cool clear sparkling spring, plashing over the huge stones that seemed meant to restrain it, sporting in pools and eddies, and lost almost as soon as it wells from the earth amid the waters of the silver Thames.

Steep as it seems and is, the chalky cliff is not inaccessible. Here and there it recedes from the river, sometimes hollowed into deep caves, and then again it advances with a more gradual slope, so as to admit of zig-zag walks practised to the summit. These walks, almost buried amongst the rich foliage, have a singular attraction in their steepness and their difficulty. Long branches of ivy trail from the cliff in every direction, mingled at this season with a gorgeous profusion of the clinging woodbine, the yellow St. John's wort, and the large purple flowers of the Canterbury bell. Our steps were literally impeded by these long garlands. Our feet were perpetually entangled in them. We crushed them as we passed.

The view from the Hermit's hut, on the height, is amongst those that can never be forgotten. We looked over the tops of the tall trees, down a sheer descent of I know not how many hundred feet, to a weir upon the Thames, foaming and brawling under our very eyes. Just beyond was one of the loveliest reaches of the river, with Cookham bridge and the fine old church forming a picture in itself. Then came a wide extent of field and meadow, mansion and village, tower and spire, the rich woods of Berkshire interspersed amongst all, the noble river winding away into the distance, and the far-off hills mingling with the clouds, until we knew not which was earth or which was sky.

Very pleasant was that sojourn by the Thames side. And amongst the pleasures that I most value, one of those which I brought home with me and trust never to lose, must be reckoned the becoming acquainted with Mr. Noel's "Rhymes and Roundelayes," and forming, not an acquaintance, for we have never met, but a friendship with the author.

Mr. Noel resides in a beautiful place in that beautiful neighbourhood, leading the life of an accomplished but somewhat secluded country gentleman ;—a most enviable life, and one well adapted to the observation of nature and to the production of poetry, but by no means so well calculated to make a volume of poems extensively known. Hence it is that the elegant and graphic description of Thames scenery which I subjoin, although it has been published nearly ten years, will probably have the charm of novelty to many of my readers :

## A THAMES VOYAGE.

Gracefully, gracefully glides our bark  
On the bosom of Father Thames,  
And before her bows the wavelets dark  
Break into a thousand gems.

The kingfisher not straighter darts  
Down the stream to his sweet mate's nest,  
Than our arrowy pinnace shoots and parts  
The river's yielding breast.

We have passed the chalk-cliff on whose crown  
The hermit's hut doth cling,  
And the bank, whose hanging woods look down  
On the smile of Cliefden spring.

We are come where Hedsor's crested fount  
Pours forth its babbling rill,  
And where the charmed eye loves to mount  
To the small church on the hill.

On, like a hawk upon the wing,  
Our little wherry flies ;  
Against her bows the ripples sing,  
And the wavelets round her rise.

In view is Cookham's ivied tower ;  
And, up yon willow reach,  
Enfolding many a fairy bower,  
Wave Bisham's woods of beech.

O'er Marlow's loveliest vale they look,  
And its spire that seeks the skies ;  
And afar, to where in its meadow-nook  
Medmenham's Abbey lies.

Still on, still on, as we smoothly glide,  
There are charms that woo the eye,—  
Boughs waving green in the pictured tide,  
And the blue reflected sky.

Swift dragon-flies, with their gauzy wings,  
Flit glistening to and fro,  
And murmuring hosts of moving things  
O'er the waters glance and glow.

There are spots where nestle wild flowers small  
With many a mingling gleam ;  
Where the broad flag waves, and the bulrush tall  
Nods still to the thrusting stream.

The Forget-me-not on the water's edge  
Reveals her lovely hue,  
Where the broken bank, between the sedge,  
Is embroidered with her blue.

And in bays where matted foliage weaves  
A shadowy arch on high,  
Serene on broad and bronze-like leaves,  
The virgin lilies lie.

Fair fall those bonny flowers ! O how  
I love their petals bright !  
Smoother than Ariel's moonlit brow !  
The Water-Nymph's delight !

Those milk-white cups with a golden core,  
Like marble lamps, that throw  
So soft a light on the bordering shore,  
And the waves that round them flow !

Steadily, steadily, speeds our bark,  
O'er the silvery whirls she springs ;  
While merry as lay of morning lark  
The watery carol rings.

Lo ! a sailing swan, with a little fleet  
Of cygnets by her side,  
Pushing her snowy bosom sweet  
Against the bubbling tide !

And see—was ever a lovelier sight ?  
One little bird afloat  
On its mother's back, 'neath her wing so white,—  
A beauteous living boat !

The threatful male, as he sails ahead,  
Like a champion proud and brave,  
Makes, with his ruffling wings outspread.  
Fierce jerks along the wave.

He tramples the stream, as we pass him by,  
In wrath from its surface springs,  
And after our boat begins to fly,  
With loudly-flapping wings.

Gracefully, gracefully glides our bark,  
And the curling current stems,  
Where the willows cast their shadows dark,  
And the ripples gleam like gems ;  
Oh, there's many a charming scene to mark  
From the bosom of Father Thames.

The following powerful lines are better known, and  
serve to show the variety of Mr. Noel's talent :

## THE PAUPER'S DRIVE.

There's a grim one-horse hearse in a jolly round trot ;  
 To the churchyard a pauper is going, I wot ;  
 The road it is rough, and the hearse has no springs,  
 And hark to the dirge that the sad driver sings :—

Rattle his bones over the stones ;  
 He's only a pauper who nobody owns.

Oh, where are the mourners ? Alas ! there are none ;  
 He has left not a gap in the world now he's gone ;  
 Not a tear in the eye of child, woman or man :—  
 To the grave with his carcase as fast as you can.

Rattle his bones over the stones ;  
 He's only a pauper who nobody owns.

What a jolting and creaking and splashing and din !  
 The whip how it cracks, and the wheels how they spin !  
 How the dirt right and left o'er the hedges is hurled !  
 The pauper at length makes a noise in the world.

Rattle his bones over the stones ;  
 He's only a pauper who nobody owns.

Poor pauper defunct ! he has made some approach  
 To gentility now that he's stretched in a coach ;  
 He's taking a drive in his carriage at last,  
 But it will not be long if he goes on so fast !

Rattle his bones over the stones ;  
 He's only a pauper who nobody owns.

But a truce to this strain ! for my soul it is sad  
 To think that a heart in humanity clad  
 Should make, like the brutes, such a desolate end,  
 And depart from the light without leaving a friend.

Bear softly his bones over the stones,  
 Though a pauper, he's one whom his Maker yet owns.

The author tells me that this incident was taken  
 from the life. He witnessed such a funeral :—a  
 coffin in a parish hearse driven at full speed.



## IV.

## OLD AUTHORS.

## ABRAHAM COWLEY.

As in the case of Ben Jonson, posterity values his writings for very different qualities from those which obtained his high reputation amongst his contemporaries, so it has happened to Cowley.

Praised in his day as a great poet, the head of the school of poets called metaphysical, he is now chiefly known by those prose essays, all too short and all too few, which, whether for thought or for expression, have rarely been excelled by any writer in any language. They are eminently distinguished for the grace, the finish, and the clearness which his verse too often wants. That there is one cry which pervades them—vanity of vanities! all is vanity!—that there is an almost ostentatious longing for obscurity and retirement, may be accounted for by the fact that at an early age Cowley was thrown among the cavaliers of the civil wars, sharing the exile and the return of the Stuarts, and doubtless disgusted, as so pure a writer was pretty sure to be, by a dissolute Court, with whom he would find it easier to sympathize in its misery than in its triumph. Buckingham, with the fellow-feeling of talent for

talent, appears to have been kind to him ; and when he fled from the world (not very far—he found his beloved solitude at Chertsey), it is satisfactory to know that he so far escaped the proverbial ingratitude of the Restoration, as to carry with him an income sufficient for his moderate wants. He did not long survive a retirement which, Sprat says, in a curious life prefixed to the edition of his works in 1719, “agreed better with his mind than his body.”

It is difficult to select from a volume so abundant in riches ; but I will begin by his opinion of theatrical audiences contained in “The Preface to the Cutter of Coleman Street :”

“There is no writer but may fail sometimes in point of wit ; and it is no less frequent for the auditors to fail in point of judgment. I perceive plainly by daily experience that Fortune is mistress of the theatre, as Tully says it is of all popular assemblies. No man can tell sometimes from whence the invisible winds rise that move them. There are a multitude of people who are truly and only spectators of a play without any use of their understanding ; and these carry it sometimes by the strength of their numbers. There are others who use their understandings too much ; who think it a sign of weakness and stupidity to let anything pass by them unattacked, and that the honour of their judgment (as some brutals imagine of their courage) consists in quarrelling with everything. We are, therefore, wonderful wise men, and have a fine business of it, we who spend our time in poetry. I do sometimes laugh, and am often angry with myself when I think on it ; and if I had a son inclined by nature to the

same folly, I believe I should bind him from it by the strictest conjurations of a paternal blessing. For what can be more ridiculous than to labour to give men delight, whilst they labour on their part more earnestly to take offence? to expose oneself voluntarily and frankly to all the dangers of that narrow passage to unprofitable fame, which is defended by rude multitudes of the ignorant, and by armed troops of the malicious? If we do ill, many discover it, and all despise us. If we do well, but few men find it out, and fewer entertain it kindly, If we commit errors, there is no pardon; if we could do wonders, there would be but little thanks, and that too extorted from unwilling givers."

Of course his play had been coldly received. Here is another bit of autobiography, singularly interesting, as coming from one who, although he never could retain the rules of grammar, was an eminent scholar, and the most precocious of all poets. It forms part of the essay, headed, "Of Myself."

"It is a hard and a nice subject for a man to write of himself. It pains his own heart to say anything of disparagement, and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise from him. There is no danger from me of my offending him in that kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune, allow me any materials for that vanity.

\* \* \* \*

"As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew, or was capable of guessing, what the world, or the glories or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave me a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others by an antipathy, imper-

ceptible to themselves, and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of roaming about on holidays, and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them, and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion if I could find him of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to all constraint, that my master could never prevail on me by any persuasions or encouragements to learn without book the common rules of grammar ; in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the same exercise out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind that I am now (which, I confess, I wonder at myself) may appear by the latter end of an ode, which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish, but of this part which I have set down (if a very little were corrected) I should hardly now be much ashamed :

“ This only grant me, that my means may lie,  
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.

Some honour I would have,  
Not from great deeds, but good alone ;  
The unknown are better than ill known ;

Rumour can ope the grave.  
Acquaintance I would have, but when't depends,  
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

‘ Books should, as business, entertain the light,  
And sleep as undisturbed as death, the night.

My house, a cottage more  
Than palace ; and should fitting be  
For all my use, no luxury.

My garden painted o'er  
With nature's hand, not art's ; and pleasures yield,  
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

“Thus would I double my life’s fading space,  
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.

And in this true delight,  
These unbought sports, this happy state,  
I would not fear, nor wish my fate ;

But boldly say each night,  
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,  
Or in clouds hide them—I have lived to-day.

“ You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets (for the conclusion is taken out of Horace); and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamp’d first, or rather engraved these characters in me: they were like letters cut into the bark of a young tree, which, with the tree, still grows proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early is a hard question. I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse as have never since left ringing there: for I remember when I began to read and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother’s parlour (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion), but there was wont to lie Spenser’s works. This I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses which I found everywhere there (though my understanding had little to do with all this); and by degrees with the tinkling of the rhyme and dance of the numbers; so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old, and was thus made a poet.

“ With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the University;

but was soon torn from thence by that violent public storm which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars to me the hyssop. Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen in such a tempest ; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the Court of one of the best princesses of the world. Now, though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life, that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant (for that was the state then of the English and French Courts); yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw clearly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it ; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with, when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewilder or entice me, when I saw that it was adulterate. I met with several great persons whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm although I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it: a storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage. Though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honourable trust, though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition in banishment and public distresses, yet I could not abstain from renewing my old

schoolboy's wish in a copy of verses to the same effect :—

“ Well, then, I now do plainly see  
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree.

“ And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his Majesty's happy Restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, who, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortune : but I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself ; and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it :—

“ Thou neither great at court, nor in the war,  
Nor at the exchange shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar.  
Content thyself with the small barren praise,  
Which neglected verse doth raise.

“ However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on. I cast myself into it a *corps perdu* without making capitulations or taking counsel of Fortune. But God laughs at a man who says to his soul, Take thy ease. I met presently not only with many little encumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness (a new misfortune to me) as would have spoilt the happiness of an emperor, as well as mine. Yet do I neither repent nor alter my course, *non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum*, nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married, though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

“ Nor by me e’er shall you,  
You of all names, the sweetest and the best,  
You, Muses, books, and liberty, and rest ;  
You, gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,  
As long as life itself forsakes not me.”

The same vein runs through the charming Essay  
“ Of Obscurity.”

\* \* \* “ The pleasantest condition of life is in *incognito*. What a brave privilege is it to be free from all contentions, from all envying, or being envied, from receiving or paying all kinds of ceremonies ! It is, in my mind, a very delightful pastime for two good and agreeable friends to travel up and down together in places where they are by nobody-known, nor know anybody. It was the case of Æneas and his Achates, when they walked invisibly about the fields and streets of Carthage. Venus herself,

“ A veil of thickened air around them cast,  
That none might know or see them as they past.

“ The common story of Demosthenes’ confession, that he had taken a great pleasure in hearing of a basket-woman say, as he passed : ‘ This is that Demosthenes,’ is wonderful ridiculous from so solid an orator. I myself have often met with that temptation to vanity (if it were any) ; but am so far from finding it any pleasure, that it only makes me run faster from the place till I get (as it were) out of sight-shot. Democritus relates, and in such a manner as if he gloried in the good fortune and commodity of it, that when he came to Athens, nobody there did so much as take notice of him ; and Epicurus lived there very well, that is, lay hid many years in his gardens, so famous since that time, with his friend Metrodorus ;



after whose death, making in one of his letters a kind commemoration of the happiness which they two had enjoyed together, he adds at last, that he thought it no disparagement to those qualifications of their life, that, in the midst of the most talked-of and talking country in the world, they had lived so long, not only without fame, but almost without being heard of. And yet, within a few years afterwards, there were no two names of men more known, or more generally celebrated. If we engage into a large acquaintance, and various familiarities, we set open our gates to the invaders of most of our time : we expose our life to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinence, which would make a wise man tremble to think of. Now, as for being known much by sight, and pointed at, I cannot comprehend the honour that lies in that. Whatsoever it be, every mountebank has it more than the best orator, and the hangman more than the Lord Chief Justice of a city. Every creature has it, both of nature and art, if it be anyways extraordinary. It was as often said, This is that Bucephalus, or This is that Incitatus, when they were led prancing through the streets, as This is that Alexander, or This is that Domitian ; and truly for the latter, I take Incitatus to have been a much more honourable beast than his master, and more deserving the consulship than he the empire.

“ I love and commend a true, good fame, because it is the shadow of virtue ; not that it doth any good to the body which it accompanies, but it is an efficacious shadow, and like that of St. Peter, cures the diseases of others. The best kind of glory, no doubt, is that which is reflected from honesty, such as was the glory of Cato and Aristides ; but it was painful to

them both, and is seldom beneficial to any man while he lives. What it is to him after his death I cannot say, because I love not philosophy merely notional and conjectural, and no man who has made the experiment has been so kind as to come back to inform us. Upon the whole matter, I account a person who has a moderate mind and fortune, and lives in the conversation of two or three agreeable friends with little commerce in the world besides, who is esteemed well enough by his few neighbours that know him, and is truly irreproachable by anybody; and so after a healthful quiet life before the great inconveniences of old age, goes more silently out of it than he came in (for I would not have him so much as cry in his exit); this innocent deceiver of the world, as Horace calls him, this *muta persona*, I take to have been more happy in his part than the greatest actors that fill the stage with show and noise, nay even than Augustus himself, who asked with his last breath whether 'he had not played his farce very well.'"

We find another graceful bit of autobiography in an Essay addressed to Evelyn, and called "The Garden :"

"I never had any other desire so strong and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always that I might be master at last of a small house and large garden, with very moderate conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the remainder of my life only to the culture of them and study of nature :

" And there (with no design beyond my wall) whole and entire  
to lie,

In no unactive ease and no unglorious poverty ;

or, as Virgil has said, shorter and better for me, that I might there

“‘*Studiis florere ignobilis oti.*’

“(Although I could wish that he had rather said, ‘*nobilis oti,*’ when he spoke of his own). But several accidents of my ill-fortune have disappointed me hitherto, and do still of that felicity; for though I have made the first and hardest step to it by abandoning all ambitions and hopes in this world, and by retiring from the noise of all business, and almost company, yet I stick still in the inn of a hired house and garden amongst weeds and rubbish; and without that pleasantest work of human industry, the improvement of something which we call (not very properly, but yet we call) our own. I am gone out from Sodom, but I am not yet arrived at my little Zoar. O let me escape thither (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live! I do not look back yet, but I have been forced to stop and make too many halts. You may wonder, Sir (for this seems a little too extravagant and pindarical for prose), what I mean by all this preface; it is to let you know that though I have missed, like a chemist, my great end, yet I account my affections and endeavours well rewarded by something that I have met with, by the bye, which is, that they have procured to me some part in your kindness and esteem.”

Here is a fine passage from the Essay “Of Solitude:”

‘ \* \* \* “Happy had it been for Hannibal, if adversity could have taught him as much wisdom as was learnt by Scipio from the highest prosperities. This

would be no wonder, if it were as truly as it is colourably and wittily said by Monsieur de Montaigne, 'That ambition itself might teach us to love solitude ; there is nothing that does so much hate to have companions.' It is true it loves to have its elbows free ; it detests to have company on either side ; but it delights, above all things, in a train behind, ay, and a cheer too before it. And the greatest part of men are so far from the opinion of that noble Roman, that if they chance to be at any time without company they are like a becalmed ship ; they never move but by the wind of other men's breath, and have no oars of their own to steer withal."

The whole Essay "Of Liberty" is full of the happiest adaptations of classical examples to Cowley's peculiar views. He speedily dismisses the public side of the question, and enlarges on the slavery to which ambitious men (Catiline unfortunate in his ambition, Cæsar prosperous) voluntarily subject themselves in the pursuit of their object. There are in this eloquent discourse many felicitous translations from Cicero and Sallust, which taken with the specimens of Anacreon (which my readers will find further on), may lead us to lament deeply that, in that age of translators, Cowley did not devote his cherished leisure to versions of some of the great masters of antiquity, especially the orators and historians.

I prefer however to give an extract from the curious fragment which he has entitled "On the Government of Oliver Cromwell ;" a strange vision of which the whole tenor is strongly against the Great Protector, but into the midst of which, put, it is true, into the

mouth of a bad angel, the following character of Cromwell is introduced as if by an instinct of truth and candour which the writer found it impossible to resist. Hume has inserted this character "altered," as he says, "in some particulars," in his history. Why altered? The Scottish historian is a most clear and pleasant narrator, but surely he does not pretend to improve Cowley's prose. I give it from the original. The spokesman is the evil angel :

"And pray, countryman," said he, very kindly and very flatteringly, "for I would not have you fall into the general error of the world, that detests and decries so extraordinary a virtue, what can be more extraordinary than that a person of mean birth, no fortune, no eminent qualities of body, which have sometimes, or of mind which have often, raised men to the highest dignities, should have the courage to attempt, and the happiness to succeed in so improbable a design as the destruction of one of the most ancient and most solidly-founded monarchies upon the earth? that he should have the power or boldness to put his Prince and master to an open and infamous death; to banish that numerous and strongly-allied family; to do all this under the name and wages of a Parliament; to trample upon them too as he pleased, and spurn them out of doors when he grew weary of them; to raise up a new and unheard-of monster out of their ashes; to stifle that in the very infancy, and set up himself above all things that ever were called Sovereigns in England; to oppress all his enemies by arms, and all his friends afterwards by artifice; to serve all parties patiently for awhile, and to command them victoriously at last; to overrun each corner of the three

nations, and overcome with equal facility both the riches of the south and the poverty of the north ; to be feared and courted by all foreign princes, and adopted a brother to the gods of the earth ; to call together parliaments with a word of his pen, and scatter them again with the breath of his mouth ; to be hourly and daily petitioned that he would please to be hired at the rate of two millions a-year to be the master of those who had hired him before to be their servant ; to have the estates and lives of three kingdoms as much at his disposal as was the little inheritance of his father, and to be as noble and liberal in the spending of them ; and lastly (for there is no end of all the particulars of his glory), to bequeath all this with one word to his posterity ; to die with peace at home and triumph abroad ; to be buried among kings and with more than regal solemnity, and to leave a name behind him not to be extinguished but with the whole world ; which as it is now too little for his praises, so it might have been too for his conquests, if the short time of his human life could have been stretched out to the extent of his immortal design."

Such is Cowley as a prose writer. And yet one of the most accomplished persons whom I have ever known assured me the other day that, excepting amongst a few men of very refined taste, he believed the *Essays* to be little read. They will rise in demand soon I hope ; for my friend Mr. Willmott, a writer deservedly popular, has praised them in one of his charming volumes just as they ought to be praised. It would be difficult to say more.

The poems are singularly unequal. But as I for my

own private recreation am wont to resort to such innocent gaieties as the fathers of song have bequeathed to us, so I seldom fail to present them to my readers ; and it happens that this philosopher, whom we have seen dealing with high and lofty thoughts, descanting like a hermit on the joys of solitude and the delights of the country,—and in this respect his odes are nothing inferior to his Essays ;—it happens that this identical Cowley hath left behind him the pleasantest of all pleasant ballads, which could hardly have been produced by any one except a thorough man of the world. It is entitled “The Chronicle,” and contains a catalogue of all the fair ladies with whom he had at different times been enamoured. Never was list more amusing. It abounds in happy traits,—especially the one, which tells to half an hour how long a silly beauty may hope to retain the heart of a man of sense. The expression when the haughty Isabella, unconscious of her conquest and marching on to fresh triumphs, beats out Susan “by the bye,” has passed into one of those proverbs, of which doubtless as of many other by-words, they who use them little guess the origin.

“The Chronicle” was written two hundred years ago. Ladies, dear ladies, if one could be sure that no man would open this book, if we were all together in (female) parliament assembled, without a single male creature within hearing, might we not acknowledge that the sex, especially that part of it formerly called coquette, and now known by the name of flirt, is very little altered since the days of the Merry Monarch ? and that a similar list compiled by some gay bachelor of Belgravia might, allowing for differences

of custom and of costume, serve very well as a companion to Master Cowley's catalogue? I would not have a man read this admission for the world.

THE CHRONICLE. A BALLAD.

Margarita first possessed,  
If I remember well, my breast,  
Margarita first of all ;  
But when awhile the wanton maid,  
With my restless heart had played,  
Martha took the flying ball.

Martha soon did it resign  
To the beauteous Catherine :  
Beauteous Catherine gave place,  
(Though loath and angry she to part  
With the possession of my heart)  
To Eliza's conquering face.

Eliza to this hour might reign,  
Had she not evil counsels ta'en :  
Fundamental laws she broke,  
And still new favourites she chose,  
Till up in arms my passions rose,  
And cast away her yoke.

Mary then, and gentle Anne,  
Both to reign at once began ;  
Alternately they swayed,  
And sometimes Mary was the fair,  
And sometimes Anne the crown did wear,  
And sometimes both I obeyed,

Another Mary then arose,  
Who did rigorous laws impose,  
A mighty tyrant she !  
Long, alas ! should I have been  
Under that iron-sceptered queen,  
Had not Rebecca set me free.



When fair Rebecca set me free,  
'Twas then a golden time with me,  
    But soon those pleasures fled ;  
For the gracious princess died,  
In her youth and beauty's pride,  
    And Judith reigned in her stead.

One month, three days, and half an hour  
Judith held the sovereign power :  
    Wondrous beautiful her face,  
But so weak and small her wit,  
That she to govern was unfit,  
    And so Susannah took her place.

But when Isabella came,  
Armed with a resistless flame ;  
    By the artillery of her eye,  
Whilst she proudly marched about,  
Greater conquests to find out,  
    She beat out Susan, by the bye.

But in her place I then obeyed  
Black-eyed Bess, her viceroy-maid,  
    'To whom ensued a vacancy.  
Thousand worse passions then possessed  
The interregnum of my breast,—  
    Bless me from such an anarchy !

Gentle Henrietta then,  
And a third Mary next began ;  
    Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria,  
And then a pretty Thomasine,  
And then another Catherine,  
    And then a long et cetera.

But should I now to you relate,  
The strength and riches of their state,  
    The powder, patches, and the pins,  
The ribands, jewels, and the rings,  
The lace, the paint, and warlike things,  
    That make up all their magazines.

If I should tell the politic arts  
 To take and keep men's hearts,  
     The letters, embassies, and spies,  
 The frowns, the smiles, and flatteries,  
 The quarrels, tears, and perjuries,  
     Numberless, nameless mysteries !

And all the little lime-twigs laid  
 By Machiavel the waiting-maid ;  
     I more voluminous should grow,  
 Chiefly if I, like them, should tell  
 All change of weather that befell,  
     Than Hollinshed or Stowe.

But I will briefer with them be,  
 Since few of them were long with me :  
     An higher and a nobler strain  
 My present empress doth claim,  
 Heleonora, first o' the name,  
     Whom God grant long to reign !

I add a few original stanzas, which show Cowley's characteristic merits and defects ;—very few, since I must find room for some of those translations from Anacreon, which for grace, spirit, and delicacy will never be surpassed.

## OF SOLITUDE.

Hail, old patrician trees, so great and good !  
 Hail, ye plebeian underwood !  
     Where the poetic birds rejoice,  
 And for their quiet nests and plenteous food,  
     Pay with their grateful voice.

\*            \*            \*            \*

Here let me careless and unthoughtful lying,  
 Hear the soft winds above me flying ;  
     With all their wanton boughs dispute,  
 And the more tuneful birds to both replying,  
     Nor be myself, too, mute.

A silver stream shall roll his waters near,  
 Gilt with the sunbeams here and there,  
 On whose enamelled bank I'll walk,  
 And see how prettily they smile,  
 And hear how prettily they talk.

Ah ! wretched and too solitary he,  
 Who loves not his own company ;  
 He'll feel the weight of it many a day,  
 Unless he call in sin or vanity  
 To help to bear it away.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE GRASSHOPPER.

*From Anacreon.*

Happy insect ! what can be  
 In happiness compared to thee ?  
 Fed with nourishment divine,  
 The dewy morning's gentle wine !  
 Nature waits upon thee still,  
 And thy verdant cup doth fill ;  
 'Tis filled wherever thou dost tread,  
 Nature's self, thy Ganymede.  
 Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing,  
 Happier than the happiest king !  
 All the fields which thou dost see,  
 All the plants belong to thee ;  
 All that summer hours produce,  
 Fertile made with early juice :  
 Man for thee doth sow and plough,  
 Farmer he, and landlord thou !  
 Thou dost innocently joy,  
 Nor dost thy luxury destroy.  
 The shepherd gladly heareth thee,  
 More harmonious than he.  
 Thee country hinds with gladness hear,  
 Prophet of the ripened year !  
 Thee Phœbus loves and doth inspire ;  
 Phœbus is himself thy sire.

To thee, of all things upon earth,  
 Life is no longer than thy mirth.  
 Happy insect! happy thou,  
 Dost neither age nor winter know;  
 But when thou'st drunk, and danced, and sung  
 Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,  
 (Voluptuous and wise withal,  
 Epicurean animal!)  
 Sated with thy summer feast,  
 Thou retir'st to endless rest.

## DRINKING.

*From Anacreon.*

The thirsty earth soaks up the rain,  
 And drinks and gapes for drink again;  
 The plants suck in the earth, and are  
 With constant drinking fresh and fair;  
 The sea itself, which, one would think,  
 Should have but little need of drink,  
 Drinks ten thousand rivers up,  
 So filled that they o'erflow the cup.  
 The busy sun, and one would guess  
 By's drunken fiery face, no less,  
 Drinks up the sea, and, when he's done,  
 The moon and stars drink up the sun.  
 They drink and dance by their own light,  
 They drink and revel all the night.  
 Nothing in nature's sober found,  
 But an eternal health goes round.  
 Fill up the bowl, then, fill it high!  
 Fill all the glasses there! for why  
 Should every creature drink but I?  
 Why, men of morals, tell me why?

## GOLD.

*From Anacreon.*

A mighty pain to love it is,  
 And 'tis a pain that pain to miss;  
 But of all pain, the greatest pain,  
 It is to love, and love in vain.

Virtue now nor noble blood,  
Nor wit by love is understood,  
Gold alone does passion move,  
Gold monopolises love !  
A curse on her, and on the man  
Who this traffic first began !  
A curse on him who found the ore !  
A curse on him who digged the store !  
A curse on him who did refine it !  
A curse on him who first did coin it !  
A curse, all curses else above,  
On him who used it first in love !  
Gold begets in brethren hate ;  
Gold in families debate ;  
Gold does friendship separate ;  
Gold does civil wars create ;  
These the smallest harms of it !  
Gold, alas ! does love beget.

I cannot conclude without a word of detestation towards Sprat, who, Goth and Vandal that he was, destroyed Cowley's familiar letters.

## V.

## COMIC POETS.

## A WET MORNING.

J. ANSTEY.

My acquaintance with "The Pleader's Guide" commenced some five-and-forty years ago, after the following fashion.

It had happened to me to make one of a large Christmas party in a large country mansion, the ladies whereof were assembled one morning dolefully enough in an elegant drawing-room. It was what sportsmen are pleased to call "a fine open day;" which, being interpreted according to the feminine version, means every variety of bad weather of which our climate is capable, excepting frost. Dirt, intolerable dirt, it always means, and rain pretty often. On the morning in question, it did not absolutely rain, it only mizzled; but the clouds hung over our heads in a leaden canopy, threatening a down pour; and all the signs of the earth testified to the foregone deluge that had already confined us to the house until our patience was worn to a thread. Heavy drops fell from the eaves, the trees in the park were dripping from every bough, the fallen leaves under the trees dank with moisture, the grass as wet as if it grew in a ford, the gravel-walks soft and plashy, the carriage-

drives no better than mud. In short, it was the very dismalest weather that ever answered to the name of "a fine open day;" and our sportsmen accordingly had all sallied forth to enjoy it, some to join Sir John's hounds, some to a great coursing meeting at Streatley.

As we stood at the windows bemoaning our imprisonment, we saw that the drizzle was fast settling into steady rain, and that there was no more chance of a ride on horseback, or a drive in an open carriage, than of the exhilarating walk which is the proper exercise of Christmas. All the pets about the park sympathised in our afflictions. The deer dropped off to their closest covert; the pied peacock, usually so stately and so dignified as he trailed his spotted train after him, when he came to the terrace to tap at the window for his dole of cake, actually sneaked away, when summoned, in pure shame at his draggled tail; the swans looked wet through. The whole party seemed chilled and dismal, and I was secretly meditating a retreat to my mother's dressing-room, to enjoy in quiet a certain volume of "*Causes Célèbres*," which I had abstracted from the library for my own private solace, when everybody was startled by a proposal of the only gentleman left at home; a young barrister, who had had sufficient courage to confess his indifference to field sports, and who now, observing on the *ennui* that seemed to have seized upon the party, offered to use his best efforts to enliven us by reading aloud—by reading a law-book. Fancy the exclamations at a medicine so singularly ill-adapted to the disease! For my own part, I was not so much astonished. I suspected that the young gentleman

had got hold of another volume of my dearly beloved "Causes Célèbres," and was about to minister to our discontent by reading a French trial. But the rest of the party laughed and exclaimed, and were already so much aroused by the proposal, that the cure might be said to be more than half accomplished, before our learned teacher opened the pages of the "Pleader's Guide."

I wish I could communicate to my extracts the zest that his selections derived from his admirable reading, and from the humorous manner in which he expounded the mystery of the legal phrases, which I shall do my best to avoid, not to overtask my reader's ingenuity.

It is an old lawyer instructing a young one:—

"But chiefly thou, dear Job, my friend,  
My kinsman, to my verse attend ;  
By education formed to shine  
Conspicuous in the pleading line ;  
For you, from five years old to twenty,  
Were crammed with Latin words in plenty ;  
Were bound apprentice to the Muses,  
And forced with hard words, blows, and bruises  
To labour on poetic ground,  
Dactyls and spondees to confound ;  
And when become in fictions wise,  
In Pagan histories and lies,  
Were sent to dive at Granta's cells  
For truth in dialectic wells ;  
There duly bound for four years more  
To ply the philosophic oar,  
Points metaphysical to moot,  
Chop logic, wrangle, and dispute ;  
And now, by far the most ambitious  
Of all the sons of Bergersdiscius,  
Present the law with all the knowledge  
You gathered both at school and college,



Still bent on adding to your store  
 The graces of a Pleader's lore,  
 And, better to improve your taste,  
 Are by your parents' fondness placed  
 Among the blest, the chosen few  
 (Blest if their happiness they knew),  
 Who, for three hundred guineas paid  
 To some great master of the trade,  
 Have, at his rooms, by special favour,  
 His leave to use their best endeavour,  
 By drawing pleas from nine till four,  
 To earn him twice three hundred more ;  
 And after dinner may repair  
 To 'foresaid rooms, and then and there  
 Have 'foresaid leave, from five till ten,  
 To draw the aforesaid pleas again.\*

Then he favours his pupil with a bit of his own  
 history, which seems to me capital :—

“ Whoe'er has drawn a special plea  
 Has heard of old Tom Tewksbury ;  
 Deaf as a post, and thick as mustard,  
 He aimed at wit, and bawled and blustered,  
 And died a *Nisi prius* leader—  
 That genius was my special pleader.  
 That great man's office I attended,  
 By Hawk and Buzzard recommended ;  
 Attorneys both of wondrous skill  
 To pluck the goose and drive the quill.  
 Three years I sat his smoky room in,  
 Pens, paper, pounce and ink consuming ;  
 The fourth, when Essoign day begun,  
 Joyful I hailed the auspicious sun,  
 Bade Tewksbury and clerk adieu ;  
 \*Purification Eighty-two  
 Of both I washed my hands ; and though  
 With nothing for my cash to show

---

\* The Purification of the Virgin Mary is one of the return  
 days of Hilary Term.

But precedents, so scrawled and blurred  
I scarce could read one single word,  
Nor in my book of common-place  
One feature of the law could trace,  
Save Buzzard's nose and visage thin,  
And Hawk's deficiency of chin,  
Which I, while lolling at my ease,  
Was wont to draw instead of pleas ;  
Yet chambers I equipt complete,  
Hired books, made friends, and gave to eat.  
If, haply, to regale my friends on,  
My mother sent a haunch of ven'son.  
I most respectfully entreated  
The choicest company to eat it ;  
To wit, old Buzzard, Hawk, and Crow,  
Item Tom Thornback, Shark, and Co.,  
Attorneys all, as keen and staunch  
As e'er devoured a client's haunch ;  
Nor did I not their clerks invite  
To taste said venison hashed at night ;  
For well I knew that hopeful fry  
My rising merit would descry,  
The same litigious course pursue,  
And, when to fish of prey they grew,  
By love of food and contest led,  
Would haunt the spot where once they fed.  
Thus having with due circumspection  
Formed my professional connexion,  
My desk with precedents I strewed,  
Turned critic, danced, or penned an ode,  
Studied the ton, became a free  
And easy man of gallantry ;  
But if, while capering at my glass,  
Or toying with some favourite lass,  
I heard the aforesaid Hawk a-coming,  
Or Buzzard on the staircase humming,  
At once the fair angelic maid  
Into my coal-hole I conveyed ;  
At once, with serious look profound,  
And eyes commercing with the ground,

I seemed as one estranged to sleep,  
 And, fixed in cogitation deep,  
 Sate motionless ; while in my hand I  
 Held my *Doctrina Placitandi*.  
 And though I never read a page in't,  
 Thanks to that shrewd well-judging agent,  
 My sister's husband, Mr. Shark,  
 Soon got six pupils and a clerk.  
 Five pupils were my stint, the other  
 I took to compliment his mother."

This piece of autobiography seems to me admirable for its neatness and point, its humour and its good-humour. The termination of the poem is a trial of matchless pleasantry between John-a-Gull and John-a-Gudgeon, for an assault at an election. I transcribe the commencement and part of the opening speech—a piece of legal comedy which will make its way even with the least learned reader :—

	THE TRIAL.*	
JOHN-A-GULL, at st.	}	In Trespass.
JOHN-A-GUDGEON.		

For the *Plaintiff*, Mr. Counsellor BOTHER'UM.—For the *Defendant*, Mr. Counsellor BORE'UM.—MR. BOTHER'UM opens the pleadings. His speech at length :—

" I rise with pleasure, I assure ye,  
 With transport to accost a jury  
 Of your known conscientious feeling,  
 Candour, and honourable dealing.  
 From Middlesex† discreetly chosen  
 (A worthy and an upright dozen),  
 This action, gentlemen, is brought,  
 By John-a-Gudgeon for a tort—"

[*Aside.*

\* As taken by an eminent short-hand writer.

† Middlesex. This being an election affray, the venue is supposed to have been changed upon the usual affidavit, for the sake of a more fair and impartial trial before a Middlesex jury.

Our French will serve us for this legal word which s, I suppose, old Norman French, pronounced English-wise, but signifying a wrong, as one might guess from the modern tongue:—

“By John-a-Gudgeon for a tort;  
The pleadings state ‘that John-a-Gull,  
With envy wrath and malice full,  
With swords, knives, sticks, staves, fist and bludgeon,  
Beat, bruised, and wounded John-a-Gudgeon.’”

This prodigious accumulation of weapons, as well as the “twelve pots, twelve mugs,” and so forth, to which we are coming, is an imitation of the real law fictions and endless repetitions which result from the circumstance of nothing being allowed to be proven at a trial that has not been named in the indictment, whereas there is no rule to compel the proof of more than the counsel think essential to the case; it is, therefore, really usual to provide against all contingencies by enumerating far more particulars than are likely to be brought forward. Lawyers will best feel the satire, but all can enjoy the fun:—

“First count’s for that with divers jugs,  
To wit, twelve pots, twelve cups, twelve mugs,  
Of certain vulgar drink, called toddy,  
Said Gull did sluice said Gudgeon’s body.  
The second count’s for other toddy,  
Thrown by said Gull on Gudgeon’s body;  
To wit, his gold-laced hat and hair on,  
And clothes which he had then and there on;  
To wit, twelve jackets, twelve surtouts,  
Twelve pantaloons, twelve pair of boots,  
Which did thereby much discompose  
Said Gudgeon’s mouth, eyes, ears, and nose,  
Back, stomach, neck, thighs, feet, and toes;

By which and other wrongs unheard of,  
His clothes were spoilt and life despaired of :  
To all these counts the plea I find  
Is son assault and issue's joined."

Here our French helps us again, and the common expression of joining issue. Now for Counsellor Bother'um's history of the battle. The watery names are very happy :—

"Such, gentlemen, is word for word  
The story told on this record.  
The fray was at a feast or revel,  
At Toadland, on the Bedford Level,  
Given, as was usual at elections,  
By Gudgeon to his Fen connections.  
They'd had a meeting at the 'Swan'  
The day before the poll began,  
And hence adjourned it to make merry  
With Mr. Coot, who keeps the 'Ferry.'  
Now John-a-Gull, who thrusts his nose  
Wherever John-a-Gudgeon goes,  
To this same feast, without suspicion,  
Unasked, it seems, had gained admission.  
Coot had just finished an oration,  
And Gudgeon, with much approbation,  
Was singing an election ballad,  
Penned by the ingenious Doctor Mallard,  
(That orthodox and learned writer,  
Who bids so fairly for a mitre,)  
When Gull, who heard this song or sonnet,  
With Mr. Gudgeon's comments on it ;  
This Gull, whose very name denoted  
The character for whom he voted,  
Flourished his knuckles in derision,  
And, with much promptness of decision,  
Began to pummel and belabour  
The short ribs of his peaceful neighbour ;  
But first with tweaks assailed his nose,  
And interspersed said tweaks with blows.

Gudgeon explained, and Gull recourse had  
To other tweaks like tweak aforesaid.  
Heaven knows a milder gentler creature  
Never was seen in human nature  
Than the forbearing and well-judging,  
Discreet and gentle John-a-Gudgeon !  
And, gentlemen, there's no man's face is  
Better received at all your races,  
Wells, mouths and water-drinking places ;  
Was alderman and mayor elect,  
Once had the honour to be pricked  
For sheriff, which important station  
He gained without solicitation.  
No doubt his lordship recognises  
The coat he had on at assizes,  
A velveret, genteel and neat,  
With tabby lined and frogs complete,  
Made for Squire Gudgeon's wedding ball,  
When first he came to Webfoot Hall,  
An ancient seat in the Isle of Ely,  
Where all the Gudgeons lived genteelly ;  
Which coat, so trimmed, so frogged, said Gull  
Did spoil, besmear, and disannul  
With the most villanous libations  
Of the most vile of vile potations ;  
For proof we'll call Gull's worthy friend,  
Who keeps a school at Toadland's end ;  
One Simon Trout, a pious pastor,  
And Dr. Tench, who spread the plaister ;  
And Farmer Chubb, an honest yeoman,  
Who speaks the truth and cares for no man ;  
But, above all, to prove our case,  
We'll show you Mr. Gudgeon's face.  
Where every injured feature pleads  
'Gainst John-a-Gull's atrocious deeds ;  
What facts, what species of excuse,  
My brother Bore'um will produce,  
What case he'll make, and how maintain  
His plea of son assault demesne,

Wise as he looks, you may rely on't,  
 He knows no more than his own client.  
 'Tis for you, gentlemen, to say  
 What damage John-a-Gull shall pay ;  
 'Tis in your wisdom, gentlemen, to pull  
 So wide the purse-strings of this factious Gull,  
 That he no more may triumph and parade  
 The streets of Cambridge in a blue cockade," &c. &c.

Here follows a grand and solemn peroration, such as may often be heard in a court of justice, and read in the "Times."

Then comes a most graphic and dramatic examination of witnesses. Simon Trout, dissenting minister and schoolmaster, is examined by Mr. Bother'um, and cross-examined by Mr. Bore'um. At first Mr. Trout *will* speak according to hearsay, what Chubb told him, and Tench ; there is no keeping him to what he himself heard and saw, and Bother'um and Bore'um wrangle over him accordingly. At last, in the middle of much rambling, he swears point blank to the assault committed by Gull, and then Bother'um, feeling him to be a dangerous witness, says—

*Both.* Come, Sir, we won't detain you. Gull,  
 You're sure, smote Gudgeon on the skull ?

*Trout.* He did.

*Bore.* Stay, Mr. What-dy'e-call'em,  
 You say you saw Gull bruise and maul him ?

*Trout.* Yes.

*Bore.* And you never go to dinners  
 To feast with publicans and sinners !  
 What ! was the bludgeon pretty thick ?

*Trout.* I cannot say I saw the stick.

*Bore.* Stay, Sir, I think that you're a teacher !

and so forth ; and, in a dexterous cross-examination, he extorts the admission that there has been some provocation, and that it merged into a regular fight.

Then we have the medical witness, Dr. Tench, surgeon and apothecary, admirably technical, translating the commonest word into Latin :—

“The fauces is in a sad condition,  
Between the nares no partition ;”

(The results of the two tweaks);

“But both so joined into conjunction,  
The olfactories declined their function ;  
Some teeth were broke, and some were lost,  
The incisores suffered most ;  
Much mischief done to the molares—  
And what a very strange affair is,  
Not the least symptom could I see  
Of dentes sapientiæ.”

The Doctor is dismissed, and Farmer Chubb appears, at first a stolid stupid witness, from whom it is difficult to extort a word, and who has a mind to break away :—

“My lord, I wishes to be going,  
For ’tis a charming time for sowing.”

(Lent assizes, I presume !)

*Both.* Stay, Mr. Chubb ; speak out, Sir, do !  
Did Gull beat Gudgeon ? Is that true ?

*Chubb.* Beat him ! He beat him black and blue.  
I never see’d a prettier fight,  
So full of malice like, and spite.

*Bore.* A fight ! Ho ! ho ! the truth’s come out,  
A fair set-to—a boxing bout ?

*Both.* And this you positively swear.

*Chubb.* Ay, sure ; why Simon Trout was there.

And then it appears that the schoolmaster had done all he could to promote the fray, and had endeavoured to persuade Chubb to act as bottle-holder to one of the parties. Chubb is dismissed, and Bore’um makes a most characteristic defence—cites



half-a-dozen books — upon which Bother'um cites somewhere about a score ; they hurl argument against argument, case against case, and get into a prodigious fury. Bore'um vows—

“ If all that I've advanced this day  
Be not good law, my lord, and sound  
As e'er was broached on legal ground,  
Soon as to chambers I return  
All my black-letter books I'll burn.”—  
“ Hold, hold” (quote Bother'um), “ 'twould be cruel  
To turn your fixtures into fuel,  
Those precious tomes with cobwebs spread,  
Which sleep so peaceful o'er your head ;  
Ere yet sentence is decreed 'em,  
Do read 'em, Master Bore'um, read 'em !”

After which piece of malice both parties suddenly cool down :—

“ Both lovingly agreed at once to draw  
A special case, and save the point in law,  
That so the battle, neither lost or won,  
Continued ended, and again begun,  
Might still survive, and other suits succeed  
For future heroes of the gown to lead,  
And future bards in loftier verse to plead.”

Although I am copying from the sixth edition, this pleasant poem is now so scarce, that, after a long search in London, I fairly gave up all hopes of succeeding, and only obtained the volume at Bath, the birth-place of the author, who was the son of Christopher Anstey, the well-known writer of the Bath Guide.

The law of this book is said to be excellent. It is recorded of I know not what great legal luminary, that the only poem he ever read in the course of his life was “ The Pleader's Guide,” and that he had the triumph and satisfaction of discovering a flaw therein.

## VI.

## AMERICAN POETS.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

THE representatives of the Anglo-Saxon race across the Atlantic—our cousins I do not know how many degrees removed—have in no way better proved their kindred than by the growing pith and substance of their literature. Of such prose writers as Channing, Norton, Prescott, Ware, Cooper, and Washington Irving, together with the many who, where there are such leaders, are sure to press close upon their footsteps, any country might be proud. But one want they had; and although not particularly fond of pleading guilty to deficiencies of any sort, they confessed it themselves: the want of a great poet. Of elegant versifiers there was no lack. I doubt if, for the fifty years that preceded the first French Revolution, England herself had been better off in the way of smooth and polished rhyme. But they are an ambitious race these transatlantic kinsmen of ours, commonly called Americans; they like to have the best that can be obtained in every department, and they do not dislike to vaunt of their possessions; and now that their great literary want is supplied in the person of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, they may

glorify themselves to their heart's content, certain that every lover of poetry, whether born under the red-cross banner of Queen Victoria, or the stripes and stars of the States, will join the general All Hail !

I do not know a more enviable reputation than Professor Longfellow has won for himself in this country—won too with a rapidity seldom experienced by our own native poets. The terseness of diction and force of thought delight the old ; the grace and melody enchant the young ; the unaffected and all-pervading piety satisfies the serious ; and a certain slight touch of mysticism carries the imaginative reader fairly off his feet. For my own part, I confess, not only to the being captivated by all these qualities (mysticism excepted), but to the farther fact of yielding to the charm of certain lines, I cannot very well tell why, and walking about the house repeating to myself such figments as this :—

“ I give the first watch of the night  
To the red planet Mars,”

as if I were still eighteen. I am not sure that this is not as great a proof of the power of the poet as can be given.

In speaking of Professor Longfellow's popularity in England, I refer chiefly to the smaller pieces, which form, however, the larger portion of his collected works. The “Spanish Student,” although beautifully written, is too little dramatic, and, above all, too Spanish for our national taste ; and “Evangeline,” with its experiments in English versification, and its strange union of a semi-ideal passion with the most real and positive of all Dutch painting, must be regarded as still upon its trial.

The shorter poems are enough. I would fain have enriched my pages with the "Excelsior" and the "Psalm of life," but they have been long enough printed to have found their way to many hearths and hearts. I prefer, therefore, quoting from the later volumes, which have only recently become known in England, although I could not resist the temptation of inserting the noble tribute to the painter and the bard, which makes the glory of the stirring lyric on Nuremberg :—

NUREMBERG.

In the valley of the Pegnitz, where across broad meadow-lands  
Rise the blue Franconian mountains, Nuremberg the ancient  
stands.

Quaint old town of toil and traffic, quaint old town of art and  
song,

Memories haunt thy pointed gables, like the rooks that round  
them throng ;

Memories of the Middle Ages, when the emperors, rough and  
bold,

Had their dwelling in thy castle, time-defying, centuries old ;

And thy brave and thrifty burghers boasted, in their uncouth  
rhyme,

That their great imperial city stretched its hand through every  
clime.

In the court-yard of the castle, bound with many an iron band,  
Stands the mighty linden, planted by Queen Cunigunda's hand :

On the square the oriel window, where in old heroic days  
Sat the poet Melchior singing Kaiser Maximilian's praise.

Everywhere I see around me rise the wondrous world of art—  
Fountains wrought with richest sculpture standing in the  
common mart ;

And above cathedral doorways, saints and bishops carved in  
stone,

By a former age commissioned as apostles to our own.

In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps enshrined his holy dust,  
And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard from age to age their trust ;

In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a pix of sculpture rare,  
Like the foamy sheaf of fountains, rising through the painted air.

Here, when art was still religion, with a simple reverent heart,  
Lived and laboured Albrecht Dürer, the Evangelist of Art.

Hence in silence and in sorrow, toiling still with busy hand,  
Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for the Better Land.

*Emigravit* is the inscription on the tombstone where he lies ;  
Dead he is not—but departed—for the artist never dies.

Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sunshine seems more fair

That he once has trod its pavement, that he once has breathed its air !

Through these streets so broad and stately, these obscure and dismal lanes

Walked of yore the Master-Singers, chanting rude poetic strains.

From remote and sunless suburbs came they to the friendly guild,

Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in spouts the swallows build.

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme,  
And the smith his iron measures hammered to the anvil's chime ;

Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy bloom

In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom.

Here Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet, laureate of the gentle craft,  
Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters in huge folios sung and laughed.

But his house is now an ale-house, with a nicely-sanded floor,  
And a garland in the window, and his face above the door ;

Painted by some humble artist, as in Adam Puschman's song,  
As the old man, grey and dove-like, with his great beard white  
and long.

And at night the swart mechanic comes to drown his cark and  
care,  
Quaffing ale from pewter tankards, in the master's antique  
chair.

Vanished is the ancient splendour, and before my dreamy eye  
Wave these mingling shapes and figures, like a faded tapestry.

Not thy Councils, not thy Kaisers, win for thee the world's  
regard,  
But thy painter, Albrecht Dürer, and Hans Sachs thy cobbler-  
bard.

Thus, O Nuremberg, a wanderer from a region far away  
As he paced thy streets and court-yards, sang in thought his  
careless lay ;

Gathering from the pavement's crevice, as a floweret of the soil,  
The nobility of labour, the long pedigree of toil.

#### THE OPEN WINDOW.

The old house by the lindens  
Stood silent in the shade,  
And on the gravelled pathway  
The light and shadow played.

I saw the nursery window  
Wide open to the air ;  
But the faces of the children  
They were no longer there.

The large Newfoundland house-dog  
Was standing by the door ;  
He looked for his little playmates  
Who would return no more.

They walked not under the lindens,  
They played not in the hall ;  
But shadow and silence and sadness  
Were hanging over all.

The birds sung in the branches  
 With sweet familiar tone ;  
 But the voices of the children  
 Will be heard in dreams alone !  
 And the boy that walked beside me  
 He could not understand  
 Why closer in mine,—ah, closer !—  
 I pressed his warm, soft hand !

The charming touch in the last stanza has a pathos peculiar to Professor Longfellow. The next poem is also one which, if printed anonymously, we should I think be ready to assign to the right author.

## THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

*L'éternité est une pendule, dont le balancier dit et redit sans cesse ces deux mots seulement, dans le silence des tombeaux : Toujours—jamais ! Jamais—toujours !—*JACQUES BRIDAINE.

Somewhat back from the village street  
 Stands the old-fashioned country seat.  
 Across its antique portico  
 Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw ;  
 And from its station in the hall  
 An ancient time-piece says to all :

“ Forever—never !  
 Never—forever.”

Half way up the stairs it stands,  
 And points and beckons with its hands  
 From its case of massive oak,  
 Like a monk, who, under his cloak,  
 Crosses himself, and sighs, alas !  
 With sorrowful voice to all who pass :

“ Forever—never !  
 Never—forever !”

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,  
 Through days of death and days of birth,  
 Through every swift vicissitude  
 Of changeful time, unchanged it stood,

## RECOLLECTIONS OF

As if, like God, it all things saw,  
 It calmly repeats those words of awe :  
     "Forever—never !  
     Never—forever !"

In that mansion used to be  
 Free-hearted Hospitality ;  
 His great fires up the chimney roared ;  
 The stranger feasted at his board ;  
 But, like the skeleton at the feast,  
 That warning time-piece never ceased :  
     "Forever—never !  
     Never—forever !"

There groups of merry children played ;  
 There youths and maidens, dreaming, strayed  
 O precious hours ! O golden prime  
 And affluence of love and time !  
 Even as a miser counts his gold  
 Those hours the ancient time-piece told :  
     "Forever—never !  
     Never—forever !"

From that chamber, clothed in white,  
 The bride came forth on her wedding-night !  
 There, in that silent room below.  
 The dead lay in his shroud of snow !  
 And in the hush that followed the prayer,  
 Was heard the old clock on the stair :  
     "Forever—never !  
     Never—forever !"

All are scattered now and fled,  
 Some are married, some are dead ;  
 And when I ask, with throbs of pain,  
 Ah ! when shall they all meet again  
 As in the days long since gone by ?  
 The ancient time-piece makes reply :  
     "Forever—never !  
     Never—forever !"



Never, here, forever there,  
Where all parting, pain and care,  
And death and time shall disappear !  
Forever there, but never here !  
The horologe of Eternity  
Sayeth this incessantly :

“ Forever—never !  
Never—forever ! ”

## TWILIGHT.

The twilight is sad and cloudy,  
The wind blows wild and free,  
And, like the wings of sea-birds,  
Flash the wild caps of the sea.

But in the fisherman's cottage  
There shines a ruddier light,  
And a little face at the window  
Peers out into the night.

Close, close it is pressed to the window,  
As if those childish eyes  
Were looking into the darkness,  
To see some form arise.

And a woman's waving shadow  
Is passing to and fro,  
Now rising to the ceiling,  
Now bowing and bending low.

What tale do the roaring ocean,  
And the night-wind bleak and wild,  
As they beat at the crazy casement,  
Tell to that little child ?

And why do the roaring ocean,  
And the night-wind wild and bleak,  
As they beat at the heart of the mother,  
Drive the colour from her cheek ?

## RESIGNATION.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,  
But one dead lamb is there!

There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,  
But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying  
And mournings for the dead;  
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,  
Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions  
Not from the ground arise,  
But oftentimes celestial benedictions  
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapours  
Amid these earthly damps,  
What seem to us but sad funereal tapers,  
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death! What seems so is transition;  
This life of mortal breath  
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,  
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead, the child of our affection,  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion  
By guardian angels led,  
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day, we think what she is doing  
In those bright realms of air;  
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,  
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken  
The bond which Nature gives,  
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,  
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her,  
For when, with raptures wild,  
In our embraces we again enfold her,  
She will not be a child ;

But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,  
Clothed with celestial grace ;  
And beautiful, with all the soul's expansion,  
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion  
And anguish long suppressed,  
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,  
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient and assuage the feeling  
We may not wholly stay ;  
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,  
The grief that must have way.

I add one simile from the "Address to a Child :"

By what astrology of fear or hope  
Dare I to cast thy horoscope !  
Like the new moon thy life appears  
A little strip of silver-light,  
And, widening outward into night,  
The shadowy disk of future years !  
And yet, upon its outer rim,  
A luminous circle faint and dim,  
And scarcely visible to us here,  
Rounds and completes the perfect sphere.  
A prophecy and intimation,  
A pale and feeble adumbration,  
Of the great world of light that lies  
Beyond all human destinies !

The concluding extract has a stronger recommendation than any other that I can give ; it is Mrs. Browning's favourite among the poems of Longfellow :

## THE ARROW AND THE SONG.

I shot an arrow into the air,  
It fell to earth I knew not where ;  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow in its flight.  
I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell to earth I knew not where ;  
For who has sight so keen and strong  
That it can follow the flight of song ?  
Long, long afterwards, in an oak  
I found the arrow still unbroke ;  
And the song, from beginning to end,  
I found again in the heart of a friend.

I venture to add an anecdote new to the English public.

Professor Longfellow's residence at Cambridge, a picturesque old wooden house, has belonging to it the proudest historical associations of which America can boast : it was the head-quarters of Washington. One night the poet chanced to look out of his window, and saw by the vague starlight a figure riding slowly past the mansion. The face could not be distinguished ; but the tall erect person, the cocked hat, the traditional costume, the often-described white horse, all were present. Slowly he paced before the house and then returned, and then again passed by, after which neither horse nor rider were seen or heard of.

Could it really be Washington ? or was it some frolic-masquerader assuming his honoured form ? For my part I hold firmly to the ghostly side of the story ; so did my informant, also a poet and an American, and as worthy to behold the spectre of the illustrious warrior as Professor Longfellow himself. I can hardly say more.

## VII.

## AUTHORS SPRUNG FROM THE PEOPLE.

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

I REMEMBER saying one day to a woman of high genius that a mutual friend of hers and mine proposed to give a series of lectures on authors sprung from the people, from the masses, as it is the fashion to say now-a-days, and her replying quickly: "Why all authors who are worth reading are sprung from the people;—it is the well-born who are the exceptions." And then she ran through a beadroll of great names from Chaucer to Burns: nevertheless this repartee was not quite accurate; not a whit more accurate than a repartee usually is; for the number of educated writers must always preponderate. But still the class of self-educated writers is large, increasingly large; and truthful biographies of such persons must always be amongst the most interesting books in the world, as showing better than any other books the development and growth of individual minds.

Mr. Bamford's "Life of a Radical" and Mr. Somerville's account of his own career have much of this merit; but the most curious of all these memoirs both for the vicissitudes of the story and the indomitable character of the man, is the "Life of Thomas Holcroft," begun by himself and concluded by Hazlitt.

Of his strength of character no better evidence can be offered than that the first seventeen chapters were dictated by him during his last illness, whilst he was in such a state that he was frequently obliged to pause several minutes between every word, and yet the events are as clearly narrated, and the style is as lucid and as lively, as if it had been written in his most vigorous day.

He was born in London in the winter of 1745 ; his father being by trade a shoemaker, but of a disposition so unsteady that he never could remain long in any place or at any occupation. Here is the account his son, a most dutiful and affectionate son, who maintained him to his death, gives of these rambling propensities :—

“Having been bred to an employment for which he was very ill-fitted, the habit that became most rooted and most fatal to my father was a fickleness of disposition, a thorough persuasion after he had tried one means of providing for himself and his family for a certain time, that he had discovered another far more profitable and secure. Steadiness of pursuit was a virtue at which he never could arrive ; and I believe few men in the kingdom had in the course of their lives been the hucksters of so many small wares, or more enterprising dealers in articles of a halfpenny value.

“I should mention that to carry on these itinerant trades my father had begun with purchasing an ass, and bought more as he could ; now and then increasing his store by the addition of a ragged pony or worn-out weather-beaten Rozinante. In autumn he turned his attention to fruit and conveyed

apples and pears in hampers from villages to market towns. The bad nourishment I met with, the cold and wretched manner in which I was clothed, and the excessive weariness I endured in following these animals day after day, and being obliged to drive creatures perhaps still more weary than myself, were miseries much too great, and loaded my little heart with sorrows far too poignant ever to be forgotten. By-roads and high-roads were alike to be traversed, but the former far the oftenest, for they were then almost innumerable, and the state of them in winter would hardly be believed at present.

“My father became by turns a collector and vender of rags, a hardwareman, a dealer in buttons, buckles, and pewter spoons—in short, a trafficker in whatever could bring gain. But there was one thing which fixed his attention longer than any other, and which, therefore, I suppose he found the most lucrative, which was to fetch pottery from the neighbourhood of Stoke in Staffordshire, and to hawk it all through the north of England. Of all other travelling this was the most continual, the most severe, and the most intolerable. \* \* \*

“Towards Litchfield on the right lay Cannock heath and town, and adjoining to this heath on the left there were coal-pits situated in a remarkably heavy clay country. Desirous of employing his asses, yet averse to go himself, my father frequently sent me to these coal-pits to get a single ass loaded, and to drive him over the heath to Rugeley, there to find a customer for my coals. The article was so cheap and so near that the profits could be but very small, yet they were something. Had the weather been fine

when I was sent on these errands the task would not have been so difficult nor the wonder so great ; but at the time I was unfortunately sent there I have a perfect recollection of deep ruts, of cattle, both asses and horses, unable to drag their legs through the clay, and of carts and waggons that were set fast in it.

“One day my ass had passed safely through the clay-ruts and deep roads, and under my guidance had begun to ascend a hill we had to cross on Cannock heath on our way to Rugeley. The wind was very high, though while we were on low ground I had never suspected its real force. But my apprehensions began to increase with our ascent, and when on the summit of the hill, nearly opposite to two clumps of trees which are pictured to my imagination as they stood there at that time, it blew gust after gust too powerful for the loaded animal to resist, and down it came. Through life I have always had a strong sense of the grief and utter despair I then felt. But what a little surprises me is that I have no recollection whatever of the means by which I found relief, but rather of the naked and desolate place in which I was, and my inability to help myself. Could I have unloaded the ass it would not have been much matter, but the coals were brought from the pits in such masses that three of them were generally an ass-load, any one of which was usually beyond my strength. I have no doubt however but I got them by some means or other to Rugeley, and brought the money for them to my father, whom I could not help secretly accusing of insensibility, though that was the very reverse of his character.

“The coal-pits were situated on the extremity of



an old forest inhabited by large quantities of red deer. At these I always stopped to look ; but what inspired and delighted me most was the noble stag, for to him the deer appeared insignificant. Him I often saw bounding along, eyeing objects without fear, and making prodigious leaps over obstacles that opposed his passage. In this free state, indeed, he cannot but excite our admiration.

“One little anecdote I must not omit. The reader will naturally suppose that from the time I began to travel the country with my father and mother I had little leisure or opportunity to acquire any knowledge by reading. I was too much pressed by fatigue, hunger, cold, and nakedness. Still, however, I cannot but suppose, as well from my own propensity to obey the will of God as from my father’s wish to encourage my inclinations of this kind, that I continued to repeat my prayers and catechism morning and evening, and on Sundays to read the Prayer-book and Bible. At all events, I had not forgotten to read ; for while we were at the house near Rugeley, by some means or other the song of ‘Chevy Chase’ came into my possession, which I read over with great delight at our fireside. My father, who knew that my memory was tolerably retentive, and saw the great number of stanzas the ballad contained, said to me, ‘Well, Tom, can you get that song by heart?’ To this question I very readily answered, ‘Yes.’ ‘In how long a time?’ ‘Why, father, you know I have got such and such work for to-morrow, and what you will set me for the following days I can’t tell ; however I can get it in three days.’ ‘What, perfectly?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Well, if you do that, I’ll give you a halfpenny.’ Rejoiced at

my father's generosity, 'Oh, then, never fear,' said I. I scarcely need add that my task was easily accomplished, and that I then had the valuable sum of a halfpenny at my own disposal."

This way of life lasted until he was nine or ten years old; then came a spell of shoemaking, and a violent attack of asthma, aggravated by the stooping position, which continued a year or two longer. The disease was at length removed by the skill of a country apothecary, and a fresh impulse was given to the poor boy's aspirations by the sight of a strongly-contested horse-race at Nottingham. His longings to be allowed to minister in some way to that noble animal became irrepressible; he confided them to his father, and was fortunate enough to be received into the service of a respectable man who kept a training stable near Newmarket. There being placed on a horse too spirited for his youth, his feebleness, and his inexperience, he got a terrible fall, and what he grieved for more, a dismissal. He was received by another trainer and dismissed again. At last he made a third application:—

"It was no difficult matter to meet with John Watson: he was so attentive to stable hours, that, except on extraordinary occasions, he was always to be found. Being first careful to make myself look as like a stable-boy as I could, I came at the hour of four, and ventured to ask if I could see John Watson. The immediate answer was in the affirmative. John Watson came, looked at me with a serious but good-natured countenance, and accosted me first with: 'Well, my lad, what is your business? I suppose I can guess; you want a place?' 'Yes, Sir.'

‘Who have you lived with?’ ‘Mr. Woodcock, on the forest. One of your boys, Jack Clarke, brought me with him from Nottingham.’ ‘How came you to leave Mr. Woodcock?’ ‘I had a sad fall from an iron-grey filly, that almost killed me.’ ‘That is bad indeed. And so you left him?’ ‘He turned me away, Sir.’ ‘That is honest. I like your speaking the truth. So you are come from him to me?’ At this question I cast my eyes down, and hesitated; then fearfully answered: ‘No, Sir.’ ‘No! What change masters twice in so short a time?’ ‘I can’t help it, Sir, if I am turned away.’ This last answer made him smile.”

So his character proving satisfactory, he is hired.

“My station was immediately assigned me. There was a remarkably quiet three years old colt lately from the discipline of the breaker, and of him I was ordered to take charge, instructed by one of the upper boys in everything that was to be done, and directed to back him and keep pace with the rest when they went out to exercise, only taking care to keep a straight line, and to walk, canter, and gallop the last. \* \* \* I did not long ride a quiet colt at the tail of the string (on whose back John Watson soon put a new comer), but had a dun horse, by no means a tame or safe one, committed to my care. I contrived to ride the dun horse through the winter. It was John Watson’s general practice to exercise his horses over the flat, and up Cambridge Hill, on the west side of Newmarket; but the rule was not invariable. One wintry day he ordered us up to the Bury hills. It mizzled a very sharp sleet, the wind became uncommonly cutting, and Dun, the horse I

rode, being remarkable for a tender skin, found the wind and the sleet, which blew directly up his nostrils, so very painful, that it suddenly made him outrageous. He started from the rank in which he was walking, tried to unseat me, endeavoured to set off full speed ; and when he found he could not master me so as to get head, began to rear, snorted most violently, threw out behind, plunged, and used every mischievous exertion of which the muscular powers of a blood-horse are susceptible. I, who felt the uneasiness he suffered before his violence began, being luckily prepared, sat him as steady and upright as if this had been his usual exercise. John Watson was riding beside his horses, and a groom, I believe it was old Cheevers, broke out into an exclamation : ‘ I say, John, that is a fine lad ! ’ ‘ Ay, ay,’ replied Watson, highly satisfied, ‘ you will find some time or other that there are few in Newmarket that will match him.’ To have behaved with true courage, and to meet with applause like this, especially from John Watson, was a triumph such as I could at this time have felt in no other way with the same sweet satisfaction. My horsemanship had been seen by all the boys, my praises had been heard by them all. \* \* \* \*

“Horses, generally speaking, are of a generous and kindly nature. Of their friendly disposition towards their keepers, there is a trait known to every boy that has the care of one of them, which ought not to be omitted. The custom is to rise very early, even between two and three in the morning, when the days lengthen. In the course of the day horses and boys have much to do. About half-past eight, perhaps, in

the evening, the horse has his last feed of oats, which he generally stands to enjoy in the centre of his smooth, carefully-made bed of clean, long straw, and by the side of him the weary boy will often lie down, it being held as a maxim, a rule without exception, that were he to lie even till morning, the horse would never lie down himself, but stand still, careful to do his keeper no harm. \* \* \* \*

"Except by accident, the race-horse never trots. He must either walk or gallop; and in exercise, even when it is the hardest, the gallop begins slowly and gradually, and increases till the horse is nearly at full speed. When he has galloped half a mile, the boy begins to push him forward without relaxation for another half mile. This is at the period when the horses are in full exercise, to which they come by degrees. The boy that can best regulate these degrees among those of light weight is generally chosen to lead the gallop; that is, he goes first out of the stable and first returns.

"In the time of long exercise this is the first *brushing gallop*. A brushing gallop signifies that the horses are nearly at full speed before it is over, and it is commonly made at last rather up hill. Having all pulled up, the horses stand some two or three minutes and recover their wind; they then leisurely descend the hill and take a long walk, after which they are brought to water. But in this, as in everything else (at least as soon as long exercise begins), everything to them is measured. The boy counts the number of times the horse swallows when he drinks, and allows him to take no more gulps than the groom orders, the fewest to the hardest

exercise, and one horse more or less than another, according to the judgment of the groom. After watering a gentle gallop is taken, and after that another walk of considerable length ; to which succeeds the second and last brushing gallop, which is by far the most severe. When it is over, another pause, thoroughly to recover their wind, is allowed them ; then a long walk is begun, the limits of which are prescribed, and it ends in directing their ride homeward.

“The morning’s exercise often extends to four hours, and the evening’s to much about the same time. \* \* \* \*

“In every stud of horses there are frequent changes ; and as their qualities are discovered, one horse is rejected and sold, or perhaps a stranger bought and admitted. It happened on such an occasion that a little horse was brought us from another stud, whence he had been rejected for being unmanageable. He had shown himself restive, and besides the snaffle, was ridden in a check rein. I was immediately placed on his back, and what seemed rather more extraordinary, ordered to lead the gallop as usual. I do not know how it happened, but under me he showed very little disposition to become refractory, and whenever the humour occurred, it was soon overcome. That he was, however, watchful for an opportunity to do mischief, the following incident will discover. Our time for hard exercise had begun perhaps a fortnight or three weeks. As that proceeds the boys are less cautious, each having less suspicion of his horse. I was leading the gallop one morning, and had gone more than half the way towards the

foot of Cambridge Hill, when something induced me to call and speak to a boy behind me, for which purpose I rather unseated myself, and as I looked back rested on my left thigh. The arch-traitor no sooner felt the precarious seat I had taken, than he suddenly plunged from the path, had his head between his legs, his heels in the air, and exerting all his power of bodily contortion, flung me from the saddle, with only one foot in the stirrup, and both my legs on the off side. I immediately heard the whole set of boys behind shouting triumphantly: 'A calf, a calf!' a phrase of contempt for a boy that is thrown. Though the horse was then in the midst of his wild antics, and increasing his pace to full speed, as far as the tricks he was playing would permit, still, finding I had a foot in the stirrup, I replied to their shouts by a whisper to myself: 'It is no calf yet.' The horse took his usual course, turned up Cambridge Hill, and now rather increased his speed than his mischievous tricks. This opportunity I took, with that rashness of spirit which is peculiar to boys; and notwithstanding the prodigious speed and irregular motion of the horse, threw my left leg over the saddle. It was with the utmost difficulty that I could preserve my balance, but I did; though by this effort I lost hold of the reins, both my feet were out of the stirrup, and the horse for a moment was entirely his own master. But my grand object was gained—I was once more firmly seated, the reins and stirrups were recovered. In a twinkling the horse, instead of being pulled up, was urged to his utmost speed; and when he came to the end of the gallop, he stopped of himself with a very good will, as he was heartily breathed. The

short exclamations of the boys, at having witnessed what they thought an impossibility, were the gratifications I received, and the greatest perhaps that could be bestowed.

“I once saw an instance of what may be called the grandeur of alarm in a horse. In winter, during short exercise, I was returning one evening on the back of a hunter that was put in training for the Hunter’s Plate. There had been some little rain, and the channel, always dry in summer, was then a small brook. As I must have rubbed his legs dry, if wetted, I gave him the rein and made him leap the brook, which he understood as a challenge for play; and beginning to gambol, after a few antics, he reared very high, and plunging forward with great force, alighted with his fore-feet on the edge of a deep gravel-pit, half-filled with water, so near that a very few inches farther he must have gone headlong down. His first astonishment and fear were so great, that he stood for some time breathless and motionless: then gradually recollecting himself, his back became curved, his ears erect, his hind and fore legs in a position for sudden retreat; his nostrils, from an inward snort, burst into one loud expression of horror, and rearing on his hind legs, he turned short round, expressing all the terrors he had felt by the utmost violence of plunging, kicking, and other bodily exertions. I was not quite so much frightened as he had been, but I was heartily glad, when he became quiet again, that the accident had been no worse. The only little misfortune I had was the loss of my cap, and being obliged to ride back some way, in order to recover it.”



By this time young Holcroft was sixteen, and had begun to feel a craving for knowledge of a different nature from any that he could obtain at Newmarket ; although even there he had contrived to read every book that came in his way, to perfect himself in arithmetic, and to acquire a scientific knowledge of vocal music, which was of great use to him in his after career. He had made this progress, too, chiefly from his own efforts, so that the great process of self-instruction which distinguished him through life was now begun ; and he already knew enough to feel an ardent desire to know more. London, where his father was now living as a cobbler, offered at least the hope of education ; accordingly, to the great amazement and regret of good John Watson, who had been uniformly kind to him, and to whom he could hardly summon courage to announce his determination, he abandoned the field in which his success had been so encouraging, took leave of his companions, bipped and quadruped, and made his way to the great city.

Here a long series of disappointments awaited him. He became, indeed, a skilful and rapid worker at the shoemaking trade ; but the position and confinement disagreed with him (well they might after the free seat on horseback, the exercise, and the pure air of Newmarket), and his habit of *idling his time in reading*, as the phrase goes, prevented his earning more than the bare necessities of his abstemious life. He tried various schemes ; taught an evening school ; kept a day school somewhere in the country, with such indifferent success that he had but one pupil, and lived upon potatoes and buttermilk for three months ; authorship, too, he tried in a small way,

creeping into notice in the most obscure newspapers and the smallest magazines: and at about the age of twenty, when barely able to support himself, he married. It is to be noted that throughout his whole life he was eminently a marrying man; having married three wives, and left a young widow, the daughter of Monsieur Mercier, author of the "Tableau de Paris." Shortly after his first marriage, of which we hear but little, although he was eminently kind and indulgent in his domestic character, he seems to have been induced, by his success in a spouting club, to try his fortune on the stage. He has left a characteristic account of his application to Foote.

"He had the good fortune to find the manager at breakfast with a young man, whom he employed partly on the stage, and partly as an amanuensis. 'Well,' said he, 'young gentleman, I guess your business by the sheepishness of your manner; you have got the theatrical *cacoethes*; you have rubbed your shoulder against the scene: nay, is it not so?' Holcroft answered that it was. 'Well and what great hero should you wish to personate? Hamlet, or Richard, or Othello, or who?' Holcroft replied that he distrusted his capacity for performing any that he had mentioned. 'Indeed!' said he, 'that's a wonderful sign of grace. I have been teased these many years by all the spouters in London, of which honourable fraternity I dare say you are a member; for I can perceive no stage varnish, none of your true strolling brass lacker on your face.' 'No, indeed, Sir.' 'I thought so. Well, Sir, I never saw a spouter before that did not want to surprise the town, in Pierre, or Lothario, or some character that demands

all the address and every requisite of a master in the art. But, come, give us a touch of your quality—a speech. There's a youngster,' pointing to his secretary, 'will roar Jaffier against Pierre. Let the loudest take both.' Accordingly he held the book, and at it they fell. The scene they chose was that of the before-mentioned characters in 'Venice Preserved.' For a little while after they began, it seems that Holcroft took the hint that Foote had thrown out, and restrained his wrath. But this appeared so insipid, and the ideas of rant and excellence were so strongly connected in his mind, that when Jaffier began to exalt his voice, he could no longer contain himself; but, as Nick Bottom says, 'they both roared so, that it would have done your heart good to hear them.' Foote smiled, and, after enduring this vigorous attack upon his organs of hearing as long as he was able, interrupted them.

"Far from discouraging our new beginner, he told him that, with respect to giving the meaning of the words, he spoke much more correctly than he had expected. 'But,' said he, 'like other novices, you seem to imagine that all excellence lies in the lungs; whereas such violent exertions should be used very sparingly, and upon extraordinary occasions; for if an actor make no reserve of his powers, how is he to rise according to the tone of the passion?' He then read the scene they had rehearsed, and with so much propriety and ease, as well as force, that Holcroft was surprised, having hitherto supposed the risible faculties to be the only ones over which he had any great power."

Thomas Holcroft came away from this celebrated

wit, delighted with the ease and frankness of his behaviour, and elated with his prospect of success. Unluckily, however, he had already entered into a negotiation with a very different person ; and tempted by an offer nominally higher, in point of salary, agreed with Macklin for a small engagement in a theatre in Dublin. The brutal manners of Macklin are well known. Hazlitt says that until the age of forty he could not even read ; an assertion which, considering the undoubted merit of his play, "The Man of the World," appears all but incredible. It is, however, certain that he was coarse, illiterate, and unfeeling ; and the manner in which he suffered the Dublin manager to depart from the engagements into which he had entered with poor Holcroft does very little honour to his principles.

For the next seven years our luckless adventurer was tossed about the world as a strolling player, taking all parts, but succeeding best in old men and low comedy, singing in choruses, filling the post of prompter—always penniless, and sometimes nearly starved. At the end of that time his prospects improved ; some family connection (it is not said what) threw him upon the powerful protection of the Grévvilles and the Crewes, and we find him numbered in the Drury Lane company, and complaining in a letter to Sheridan of walking in processions, and playing the part of a dumb steward in "Love for Love."

Nevertheless, matters are mending. He takes a house in London, marries a second wife, becomes a recognised author, and is employed by the London booksellers to write an account of the riots of 1780. Whilst attending the Old Bailey trials for that pur-

pose, he was happy enough to save the life of an innocent man, who had nearly been condemned through the mistake of a witness.

Things go better. He brings out his less-known novels, his least celebrated, but still successful plays; and becomes one of the best and most voluminous translators upon record. If ever one happens to take up an English version of a French or German book of that period—"Memoirs of Baron Trenck," or "Caroline de Litchfield"—and if that version have in it the zest and savour of original writing, we shall be sure to find the name of Thomas Holcroft in the title-page.

One of his translating feats was remarkable. Beaumarchais' wonderful play of "Figaro," was carrying the world before it in Paris, and would be sure to make the fortune of an English theatre. But the comedy was unpublished, and no copy could be procured from any quarter. Holcroft made up his mind to attend the performance every evening until he had fixed the whole work in his memory. He took a friend with him, and they wrote down their several recollections on their return, very literally comparing notes. When it is remembered that the "Marriage of Figaro" is the longest play in the French language, the effort of a foreigner bringing the whole away in a week or ten days will appear most extraordinary, for not the slightest memorandum could be made in the theatre. His translation, under the name of "Follies of a Day," appeared almost immediately at Covent Garden, producing him six hundred pounds from the manager, besides a large sum for the copyright.

This was perhaps the happiest time of Mr. Hol-

croft's life—this and a few succeeding years. His comedies, "Duplicity," "The School for Arrogance," and "The Road to Ruin," evinced talent (I had well-nigh written genius) of the highest order. The serious parts above all are admirable. Perhaps no scenes have ever drawn so many tears as those between the father and the son in the last-mentioned play. The famous "Good Night" is truly the one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin; and although I have seen it played as well as anything can be played by Munden and Elliston, I have always felt that the real merit belonged to the author. His greater novels, too, "Anna St. Ives" and "Hugh Trevor," were full of powerful writing; and he seemed destined to a long course of literary prosperity. A terrible domestic grief came to break the course of this felicity. I transcribe Mr. Hazlitt's narrative:

"William Holcroft was his only son, and favourite child; and this very circumstance, perhaps, led to the catastrophe which had nearly proved fatal to his father, as well as to himself. He had been brought up, if anything, with too much care and tenderness: he was a boy of extraordinary capacity, and Mr. Holcroft thought no pains should be spared for his instruction and improvement. From the first, however, he had shown an unsettled disposition; and his propensity to ramble was such, from his childhood, that when he was only four years old, and under the care of an aunt in Nottingham, he wandered away to a place at some distance, where there was a coffee-house, into which he went, and read the newspapers to the company, by whom he was taken care of, and sent home. This propensity was so strong in him

that it became habitual, and he had run away six or seven times before the last.

"On Sunday, November 8th, 1789, he brought his father a short poem. A watch, which had been promised to him as a reward, was given to him; his father conversed with him in the most affectionate manner, praised, encouraged him, and told him that, notwithstanding his former errors and wanderings, he was convinced he would become a good and excellent man. But he observed, when taking him by the hand to express his kindness, that the hand of the youth, instead of returning the pressure as usual, remained cold and insensible. This, however, at the moment was supposed to be accidental. He seemed unembarrassed, cheerful, and asked leave without any appearance of design or hesitation, to dine with a friend in the city, which was immediately granted. He thanked his father, went down stairs, and several times anxiously inquired whether his father were gone to dress. As soon as he was told that he had left his room, he went up stairs again, broke open a drawer, and took out forty pounds. With this, the watch, a pocket-book, and a pair of pistols of his father's, he hastened away to join one of his acquaintances, who was going to the West Indies. He was immediately pursued to Gravesend, but ineffectually. It was not discovered till the following Wednesday that he had taken the money. After several days of the most distressing inquietude, there appeared strong presumptive proof that he, with his acquaintance, was on board the 'Fame,' Captain Carr, then lying in the Downs. The father and a friend immediately set off, and travelled post all Sunday night to Deal. Their

information proved true, for he was found to be on board the 'Fame,' where he had assumed a false name, though his true situation was known to the Captain. He had spent all his money except fifteen pounds, in paying for his passage, and purchasing what he thought he wanted. He had declared he would shoot any person who came to take him ; but that if his father came he would shoot himself. His youth, for he was but sixteen, made the threat appear incredible. The pistols, pocket-book, and remaining money were locked up in safety for him by his acquaintance. But he had another pair of pistols concealed. Mr. Holcroft and his friend went on board, made inquiries, and understood he was there. He had retired into a dark part of the steerage. When he was called and did not answer, a light was sent for ; and as he heard the ship's steward, some of the sailors, and his father, approaching, conscious of what he had done, and unable to bear the presence of his father, and the open shame of detection, he suddenly put an end to his existence.

"The shock which Mr. Holcroft received was almost mortal. For three days he could not see his own family, and nothing but the love he bore that family could probably have prevented him from sinking under his affliction. He seldom went out of his house for a whole year afterwards ; and the impression was never completely effaced from his mind."

After recovering from this calamity, Mr. Holcroft was surprised by one of a totally different nature, which came in the form of an indictment for high treason. Nothing but the panic into which the minds of men were thrown by the crimes and excesses of the



first French Revolution can explain the virulence with which every one who stood suspected of cherishing liberty, or desiring reform, was assailed during that evil day. It was the cruel and unreasoning persecution that is born of fear; and in Mr. Holcroft's case the wrong was more glaring than in that of most others, inasmuch as he was a purely speculative politician, and his speculations, although sufficiently visionary and Utopian, were anything rather than sanguinary or violent. One of his friends said of him, that he was a sort of natural Quaker. And certainly it would be as wise to prosecute a member of the Peace Society, or a writer on the millennium, as one whose dreams were of the perfectibility of human nature, the extinction of warfare, and the triumph of wisdom and justice upon earth.

He belonged it is true to the Society for Constitutional Information, but had moved none of the resolutions, had seldom spoken, and except for his literary eminence, was one of the least prominent members of the association. Nevertheless, his name, together with those of Hardy, Thelwall, Horne Tooke, and eight others, appeared in the Bill presented to the Grand Jury at Hicks's Hall. Mr. Holcroft in some measure retaliated upon the crown lawyers the surprise they had occasioned him by unexpectedly presenting himself before Chief Justice Eyre, and surrendering himself to the Court without waiting for the execution of the warrant. The manliness and firmness of his conduct, accompanied by perfect respectfulness and self-command, obtained for him more civility than was shown to the other parties included in the indictment.

The issue is well known. Thomas Hardy, the first

man put into the dock, was acquitted, and the other prisoners were discharged without being brought to trial.

But the effect of this accusation did not terminate in the Court of Justice. The demon of party hatred was evoked. Even such a man as Mr. Windham, high-minded, large-hearted, chivalrous as he was, did not disdain to talk of "acquitted felons," and, as a dramatic writer, Mr. Holcroft was especially amenable to public opinion. Every fresh play was a fresh battle; and a battle, whatever be the issue, is in itself fatal to a great success; so that, at last, comedies, which had no more to do with politics than "The Merry Wives of Windsor," were fain to be brought out under the name of a fictitious author.

It is not many years ago that I and another lover of the drama, an old and valued friend, were disputing as to the writer of "He's Much to Blame." Both possessed the play and both were certain as to the name printed in the title-page. Neither were wrong. It was the story of the two knights and the shield. My friend's copy was the first edition with the feigned name; mine the seventh, when the ordeal was passed, and the true author restored to his rightful place. May heaven avert from us the renewal of such prejudice and such injustice!

Wearied out with these conflicts, Mr. Holcroft retired first to Hamburgh and then to France, where he resided many years, occasionally sending to England translations of popular foreign books. His last original work was one on France of great merit. Few knew the people better, or could describe them so well. His stories are pleasant and characteristic:

"My wife was one day buying some fish; while

she was undetermined the girl said to her, '*Prenez cela, car votre mari est un brave homme ?*' My wife replied, '*Oui, cela, se peut bien ; mais comment savez vous qu'il est un brave homme ?*' '*C'est égal,*' answered the girl, '*cela fait plaisir à entendre.*' This girl's maxim is sound morality wherever I have been in France."

This is characteristic too in the best sense : a charming mixture of goodness and grace.

"A poor musician who usually brought a small pianoforte in the afternoon to the Champs Elysées, and played that those who were pleased might reward him by a trifle, having played in vain one evening was sorrowfully returning home. He was seen by Elleviou (a famous actor), remarked, and questioned. The poverty and ill success of the wandering musician moved the pity of the actor, who desired the instrument might again be put down ; and stepping aside he said he would return instantly. His wife and friend had passed on, and he brought them back. It was nearly dark. Pradere, his friend, sat down to the pianoforte and accompanied Elleviou who began to sing, to the astonishment of numbers that were soon assembled. The men had drawn the hat over the brow ; Madame Elleviou let down her veil, and went round to collect. The pleasingness of her manner, the little thankful curtsies she dropt to all who gave, the whiteness of her hand, and the extraordinary music they heard, rendered the audience so liberal, that she made several *tours* and none ineffectually. Elleviou, however, could not long remain unknown, and finding themselves discovered Madame Elleviou gave all, and it was supposed more than all, she had collected from the crowd to the poor musician.

The sum amounted to thirty shillings, and among the pence and halfpence there were crown pieces which no doubt were given by the actors. The feelings of the man as the audience dispersed are not easily to be described. The unexpected relief afforded to him who was departing so disconsolate was great indeed ; but it was forgotten in the charming behaviour of those who relieved him ; in their almost divine music and in the strangeness of the adventure. The surrounding people were scarcely less moved ; so kind an act from a man in such high public estimation excited more than admiration ; and the tears of gratitude shed by the musician drew sympathising drops from many of the spectators."

Mr. Holcroft wrote little verse, but had he chosen that medium of thought, would probably have excelled in it. The story of "Gaffer Gray" has, in common with many short poems of Southey written at the same period, the great fault of setting class against class, a fault which generally involves a want of truth ; but it does its work admirably, and produces exactly the effect intended in the fewest possible words :—

"Ho! why dost thou shiver and shake,  
Gaffer Gray,

And why doth thy nose look so blue?"

"'Tis the weather that's cold,

'Tis I'm grown very old,

And my doublet is not very new,

Well-a-day!"

"Then line thy worn doublet with ale,

Gaffer Gray,

And warm thy old heart with a glass."

"Nay, but credit I've none,

And my money's all gone ;

Then say how may that come to pass?

Well-a-day!"

"Hie away to the house on the brow,  
Gaffer Gray ;  
And knock at the jolly priest's door."  
"The priest often preaches  
Against worldly riches ;  
But ne'er gives a mite to the poor,  
Well-a-day !"

"The lawyer lives under the hill,  
Gaffer Gray,  
Warmly fenced both in back and in front."  
"He will fasten his locks,  
And will threaten the stocks,  
Should he ever more find me in want,  
Well-a-day !"

"The squire has fat beeves and brown ale,  
Gaffer Gray,  
And the season will welcome you there."  
"His fat beeves and his beer  
And his merry new year  
Are all for the flush and the fair,  
Well-a-day !"

"My keg is but low, I confess,  
Gaffer Gray :  
What then ? While it lasts, man, we'll live."  
"The poor man alone,  
When he hears the poor moan,  
Of his morsel a morsel will give,  
Well-a-day !"

This author, so gifted, so various, and so laborious, one of the most remarkable of self-educated men, died in London on the 3rd of March, 1809, after a long and painful illness, at the age of sixty-three ; I fear poor.

## VIII.

## AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

## SITTING IN THE LANE.

## BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

THERE are some places that seemed formed by nature for doubling and redoubling the delight of reading and dreaming over the greater poets. Living in the country, one falls into the habit of choosing out a fitting nest for that enjoyment, and with Beaumont and Fletcher especially, to whose dramatic fascinations I have the happy knack of abandoning myself, without troubling myself in the least about their dramatic faults (I do not speak here of graver sins, observe, gentle reader); their works never seem to me half so delightful as when I pore over them in the silence and solitude of a certain green lane, about half a mile from home; sometimes seated on the roots of an old fantastic beech, sometimes on the trunk of a felled oak, or sometimes on the ground itself, with my back propped lazily against a rugged elm.

In that very lane am I writing on this sultry June day, luxuriating in the shade, the verdure, the fragrance of hay-field and of bean-field, and the

absence of all noise, except the song of birds, and that strange mingling of many sounds, the whirl of a thousand forms of insect life, so often heard among the general hush of a summer noon.

Woodcock Lane is so called, not after the migratory bird so dear to sportsman and to epicure, but from the name of a family, who three centuries ago owned the old manor-house, a part of which still adjoins it, just as the neighbouring eminence of Beech Hill is called after the ancient family of De la Beche, rather than from the three splendid beech-trees that still crown its summit; and this lane would probably be accounted beautiful by any one who loved the close recesses of English scenery, even though the person in question should happen not to have haunted it these fifty years as I have done.

It is a grassy lane, edging off from the high road, nearly two miles in length, and varying from fifty to a hundred yards in width. The hedgerows on either side are so thickly planted with tall elms as almost to form a verdant wall, for the greater part doubly screened by rows of the same stately tree, the down-dropping branches forming close shady footpaths on either side, and leaving in the centre a broad level strip of the finest turf, just broken, here and there, by cart-tracks, and crossed by slender rills. The effect of these tall solemn trees, so equal in height, so unbroken, and so continuous, is quite grand and imposing as twilight comes on; especially when some slight bend in the lane gives to the outline almost the look of an amphitheatre.

On the southern side, the fields slope with more or less abruptness to the higher lands above, and winding footpaths and close woody lanes lead up the hill to the breezy common. To the north the fields are generally of pasture land, broken by two or three picturesque farm-houses, with their gable ends, their tall chimneys, their trim gardens, and their flowery orchards; and varied by a short avenue, leading to the equally picturesque old manor-house of darkest brick and quaintest architecture. Over the gates, too, we catch glimpses of more distant objects. The large white mansion where my youth was spent, rising from its plantations, and the small church, embowered in trees, whose bell is heard at the close of day, breathing of peace and holiness.


Towards the end of the lane a bright clear brook comes dancing over a pebbly bed, bringing with it all that water is wont to bring of life, of music, and of colour. Gaily it bubbles through banks adorned by the yellow flag, the flowering rush, the willow-herb, the meadow-sweet, and the forget-me-not; now expanding into a wide quiet pool, now contracted into a mimic rapid between banks that almost meet; and so the little stream keeps us company, giving on this sunny day an indescribable feeling of refreshment and coolness, until we arrive at the end of the lane, where it slants away to the right, amidst a long stretch of water-meadows; whilst we pause to gaze at the lovely scenery on the other hand, where a bit of marshy ground leads to the park paling and grand old trees of the Great House at Beech Hill through an open grove of oaks, terminated by a piece of wild woodland, so wild, that



Robin Hood might have taken it for a glade in his own Forest of merry Sherwood.

Except about half a mile of gravelly road, leading from the gate of the manor-house to one of the smaller farms, and giving by its warm orange tint, much of richness to the picture, there is nothing like a passable carriage way in the whole length of the lane, so that the quiet is perfect.

Occasional passengers there are, however, gentle and simple; my friend, Mr. B., for instance, has just cantered past on his blood-horse with a nod and a smile saying nothing, but apparently a good deal amused with my arrangements. And here comes a procession of cows going to milking, with an old attendant, still called the cow-boy, who, although they have seen me often enough, one should think, sitting underneath a tree writing, with my little maid close by hemming flounces, and my dog, Fanchon, nestled at my feet—still *will* start as if they had never seen a woman before in their lives. Back they start and then they rush forward, and then the old drover emits certain sounds, which it is to be presumed the cows understand; sounds so horribly discordant, that little Fanchon—although to her, too, they ought to be familiar, if not comprehensible—starts up in a fright on her feet, deranging all the economy of my extempore desk, and well-nigh upsetting the ink-stand. Very much frightened is my pretty pet, the arrantest coward that ever walked upon four legs! And so she avenges herself, as cowards are wont to do, by following the cows at safe distance, as soon as they are fairly past, and beginning to bark



again when they are nearly out of sight. Then follows a motley group of the same nature, colts, yearlings, calves, heifers, with a shouting boy and his poor shabby mongrel cur for driver. The poor cur wants to play with Fanchon, but Fanchon, besides being a coward, is also a beauty and holds her state; although I think if he could but stay long enough, that the good humour of the poor merry creature would prove infectious and beguile the little lady into a game of romps. Lastly, appears the most solemn troop of all, a grave company of geese and goslings with the gander at their head, marching with the decorum and dignity proper to the birds who saved Rome. Fanchon, who once had an affair with a gander in which she was notably worsted, retreats out of sight and ensconces herself between me and the tree.

Besides these mere passing droves, we have a scattered little flock of ewes and lambs belonging to an industrious widow on the hill, and tended by two sunburnt smiling children, her son and daughter; a pretty pair, as innocent as the poor sheep they watch beside, never seen apart. And peasants returning from their work, and a stray urchin, birds-nesting; and that will make a complete catalogue of the frequenters of our lane—except, indeed, that now and then a village youth and village maiden will steal along the sheltered path. Perhaps they come to listen to the nightingales, for which the place is famous; perhaps they come to listen to the voice which each prefers to all the nightingales that ever sang—who knows?

Such are our passers-by. Sometimes, however, we



have what I was about to call settled inhabitants in the shape of a camp of gipsies.

Just where the lane, enlivened by a rustic bridge, suddenly expands to nearly double its proper width, a nook appears, so dry, so snug, so shady, so cozy, that it is almost worth while to be a gipsy to live in it. Here, at almost every season, between May and November, may be seen two or three low tents with a cart or so drawn up under the hedge, an old horse and sundry donkeys grazing round about. At safe distance from the encampment appears a fire, glimmering and vapoury by day, glowing into an intensity of blaze and comfort in the twilight. Sometimes a pot is hung on by the primitive contrivance of three sticks united at the top, sometimes a copper kettle dazzlingly bright and clean, and around it the usual group of picturesque women and children. The men, who carry on a small trade in forest ponies, are seldom visible at the camp: the children make baskets, the women sell them and tell fortunes; the former calling affording an excuse and an introduction to the less ostensible, but not less profitable craft.

Baskets they make and baskets they sell, at about double the price at which they might be bought at the dearest shop in the good town of Belford Regis; of this I am myself a living instance, having been talked into buying a pair at that rate only the last Saturday that ever fell.

I confess to liking the gipsies: strange, wild, peculiar people, whose origin, whose history, whose very language is a mystery! I do not like them the less that I have never experienced at their hands the

slightest incivility or the most trifling wrong—for this affair of the baskets can hardly be called such, it being wholly at my option to buy or to refuse.

Last Saturday I happened to be sitting on a fallen tree somewhat weary; my little damsel working as usual at the other end, and Fanchon balancing herself on the trunk between us; the curls of her brown coat—she is entirely brown—turning into gold as the sunshine played upon them through the leaves.

In this manner were we disposed, when a gipsy, with a pair of light baskets in her hand, came and offered them for sale. She was a middle-aged woman, who, in spite of her wandering life, perhaps, because of that hardy, out-of-door life, had retained much of her early beauty; the flashing eyes, the pearly teeth, the ruddy cheeks, the fine erect figure. It happened that, not wanting them, my companion had rejected these identical baskets when brought to our door in the morning. She told me so, and I quietly declined them. My friend the gipsy apparently gave the matter up, and claiming me as an old acquaintance, began to inquire after my health, and fell into the pleasantest strain of conversation possible; spoke of my father, who, she said, had been kind to her and to her tribe (no doubt she said truly; he was kind to everybody, and had a liking for the wandering race); spoke of her children at the gipsy school in Dorsetshire; of the excellent Mr. Crabbe, the friend of her people, at Southampton; then she began stroking Fanchon (who, actually to my astonishment, permitted the liberty; in general she suffers no one to touch her that is not gentleman or lady); Fanchon she stroked, and of Flush, the dear old dog, now lying

under the rose tree, she talked ; then to leave no one unpropitiated, she threw out a word of pleasant augury, a sort of gratuitous fortune-telling, to the hemmer of flounces ; then she attacked me again with old recollections, trusting with singular knowledge of human nature to the power of the future upon the young, and of the past upon the old—to me she spoke of happy memories, to my companion of happiness to come ; and so (how could I help it ?) I bought the baskets.

I seem to have wandered pretty widely from my subject ; but the old dramatists loved these commoners of nature. Broome, in the "Jovial Crew," has constructed a pleasant and genial comedy out of no higher materials, and our authors, themselves, in "Beggar's Bush," have made most dramatic and effective use of these outlawed wanderers, and would, I am sure, have been the last to blame me for dallying in their company.

I extract some of the charming lyrics interspersed through their plays, not starting from them as Ben Jonson's do, a shining gem in a dusky mine, but incorporate with the golden ore as rich and precious as themselves.

FROM THE "MAID'S TRAGEDY."

Lay a garland on my hearse,  
Of the dismal yew ;  
Maidens willow branches bear,  
Say I died true.  
My love was false, but I was firm,  
From my hour of birth ;  
Upon my buried body lie  
Lightly, gentle earth.

## FROM THE "LITTLE FRENCH LAWYER."

This way, this way, come and hear,  
 You that hold these pleasures dear;  
 Fill your ears with our sweet sound,  
 While we melt the frozen ground.  
 This way, come : make haste, O fair !  
 Let your clear eyes gild the air.  
 Come and bless us with your sight ;  
 This way, this way, seek delight !

## FROM THE "ELDER BROTHER."

Beauty clear and fair,  
 Where the air  
 Rather like a perfume dwells ;  
 Where the violet and the rose,  
 Their blue veins in blush disclose,  
 And come to honour nothing else.

Where to live near  
 And planted there,  
 Is to live, and still live new ;  
 Where to gain a favour is  
 More than light, perpetual bliss,  
 Make me live by serving you.

Dear, back again recall,  
 To this light :  
 A stranger to himself and all.  
 Both the wonder and the story,  
 Shall be yours and eke the glory ;  
 I am your perpetual thrall.

## FROM "VALENTINIAN."

The following songs are strikingly illustrative of a peculiarity that has often struck me in reading the dramas of Beaumont and Fletcher ; the absence of any mark of antiquity, either in the diction or the

construction. Hardly anything in their verse smacks of the age. They were contemporary with Ben Jonson, and yet how rugged is his English compared with their fluent and courtly tongue! They were almost contemporary with a greater than he—a greater far than any or all, and yet Shakespeare's blank verse has an antique sound when read after theirs. Dryden, himself so perfect a model as regards style, says in one of those master-pieces of criticism, the prefaces to his plays, that in Beaumont and Fletcher, our language has attained to its perfection. I doubt if it have much improved since, nor has it for the uses of poetry very materially altered. This "Invocation to Sleep" might, for diction and rhythm, have been written to-day, always supposing that we had anybody capable of writing it.

Care-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,  
 Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose  
 On this afflicted Prince! Fall like a cloud  
 In gentle showers; give nothing that is loud  
 Or painful to his slumbers; easy, light,  
 And as a purling stream thou son of night  
 Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain,  
 Like hollow-murmuring wind or silver rain!  
 Into this Prince, gently, oh gently slide,  
 And kiss him into slumbers like a bride!

The same may be said of the next.

God Lyæus, ever young  
 Ever honoured, ever sung;  
 Stained with blood of lusty grapes,  
 In a thousand lusty shapes.  
 Dance upon the mazer's brim,  
 In the crimson liquor swim;  
 From the plenteous hand divine,  
 Let a river run with wine.  
 God of youth, let this day here  
 Enter neither care nor fear!

## FROM "ROLLO."

Take, oh, take those lips away,  
 That so sweetly were forsworn ;  
 And those eyes, the break of day,  
 Lights that do mislead the morn.  
 But my kisses bring again,—  
 Seals of love, though sealed in vain.  
 Hide, oh, hide those hills of snow,  
 Which thy frozen bosom bears,  
 On whose tops the pinks that grow,  
 Are of those that April wears.  
 But first set my poor heart free,  
 Bound in those icy chains by thee.

We are irresistibly reminded of the "Penseroso" in reading the fine song that follows, as we are of "Comus" in the "Faithful Shepherdess." That Milton had Fletcher in his thoughts cannot be doubted ; but the great epic poet added so much from his own rich store, that the imitation may well be pardoned by the admirers of both, the rather that the earlier bard stands the test of such a comparison well. Both are crowned poets ; but they wear their bays with a difference.

## FROM THE "NICE VALOUR, OR THE PASSIONATE MADMAN."

Hence all you vain delights,  
 As short as are the nights,  
 Wherein you speed your folly !  
 There's nought in this life sweet,  
 If man were wise to see't,  
 But only melancholy,  
 Oh sweetest melancholy !  
 Welcome, folded arms, and fixèd eyes,  
 A sigh that piercing mortifies,  
 A look that's fastened to the ground,  
 A tongue chained up without a sound !



Fountain heads and pathless groves,  
Places which pale passion loves!  
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls  
Are warmly housed, save bats and owls!  
    A midnight bell, a parting groan,  
    These are the sounds we feed upon.  
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley,  
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy.

## THE SATYR'S SPEECH, FROM THE "FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS."

Through yon same bending plain,  
That flings his arms down to the main,  
And thro' these thick woods have I run  
Whose bottom never kissed the sun,  
Since the lusty Spring began.  
All to please my master Pan,  
Have I trotted without rest  
To get him fruit; for at a feast  
He entertains this coming night  
His paramour, the Syrinx bright.  
But behold, a fairer sight!  
By that heavenly form of thine,  
Brightest fair, thou art divine;  
Sprung from great immortal race  
Of the gods; for in thy face  
Shines more awful majesty,  
Than dull weak mortality  
Dare with misty eyes behold  
And live! Therefore on this mould  
Lowly do I bend my knee  
In worship of thy deity.  
Deign it, goddess, from my hand  
To receive whate'er this land  
From her fertile womb doth send  
Of her choice fruits; and but lend  
Belief to that the satyr tells:  
Fairer by the famous wells  
'To this present day ne'er grew,  
Never better nor more true.

Here be grapes, whose lusty blood  
Is the learned poet's good ;  
Sweeter yet did never crown  
The head of Bacchus ; nuts more brown  
Than the squirrel whose teeth crack 'em ;  
Deign, oh ! fairest fair, to take 'em !  
For these black-eyed Dryope  
Hath oftentimes commanded me  
With my clasped knee to climb :  
See, how well the lusty time  
Hath decked their rising cheeks in red,  
Such as on your lips is spread.  
Here be berries for a queen,  
Some be red, some be green ;  
These are of that luscious meat  
The great god Pan himself doth eat :  
All these, and what the woods can yield,  
The hanging mountain, or the field,  
I freely offer, and ere long  
Will bring you more, more sweet and strong ;  
'Till when humbly leave I take,  
Lest the great Pan do awake,  
That sleeping lies in a deep glade,  
Under a broad beech's shade.  
I must go, I must run,  
Swifter than the fiery sun.

The charming pastoral from whence this beautiful speech is taken, was irrevocably condemned in the theatre on the first and only night of representation ; which catastrophe, added to a similar one that befell Congreve's best comedy, "The Way of the World," both authors being at the time in the very flood-tide of popularity, has been an unspeakable comfort to unsuccessful dramatists ever since. I recall it chiefly to mention the hearty spirit with which two of the most eminent of Fletcher's friendly rivals came to the rescue with laudatory verses. The circumstance does

so much honour to all parties, and some of the lines are so good, that I cannot help quoting them ; George Chapman says that the poem—

Renews the golden world, and holds through all  
The holy laws of homely Pastoral ;  
Where flowers and founts and nymphs and semi-gods  
And all the graces find their old abodes ;  
Where forests flourish but in endless verse,  
And meadows, nothing fit for purchasers :  
This iron age

(Think of that in the days of James the First !)

This iron age that eats itself will never  
Bite at your golden world, that others ever  
Loved as itself.

Ben Jonson, first characterising the audience after a fashion by no means complimentary, says that the play failed because it wanted the laxity of moral and of language which they expected and desired. He continues :—

I that am glad thy innocence was thy guilt,  
And wish that all the muses' blood were spilt  
In such a martyrdom, to vex their eyes,  
Do crown thy murdered poem, which shall rise  
A glorified work to time, when fire  
Or moths shall eat what all these fools admire.

For the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, that mine of superb and regal poetry, I have no room now. They must remain untouched.

## IX.

## FASHIONABLE POETS.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

It is now nearly thirty years ago that two youths appeared at Cambridge, of such literary and poetical promise as the University had not known since the days of Gray. What is rarer still, the promise was kept. One of these "marvellous boys" turned out a man of world-wide renown—the spirited poet, the splendid orator, the brilliant historian, the delightful essayist—in a word, Thomas Babington Macaulay, now, I suppose, incontestibly our greatest living writer. The other was the subject of this paper.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed (I wish it had pleased his godfathers and godmothers to bestow upon him a plain English Christian name, and spare him and me the vulgar abomination of this conglomeration of inharmonious sounds!) Winthrop Mackworth Praed was born in London, in the beginning of this century, of parents belonging to the great banking-house, which still remains in the family. Sent early to Eton, he, while yet a schoolboy, followed the example of Canning, who appears to have been the object of his emulation in more points than one, and in conjunction with Mr. Moultrie set up a paper called the "Etonian,"

to which he was the principal contributor, and which was so successful that it went through four editions, and established for the chief writer a high reputation for precocious talent. At Cambridge this reputation was more than sustained. He was the pride and glory of Trinity, and left college with an almost unprecedented number of prizes, for Greek ode and Latin epigram. Even the greater world of London, where University fame so often melts away and is seen no more, was equally favourable to Mr. Praed. He and his friendly rival, Mr. Macaulay, gave their valuable assistance to "Knight's Quarterly Magazine," and every fresh article made its impression. He wrote also in the "New Monthly," and in the annuals, then seen on every table, with still increasing brilliancy; contributed pungent political satire to other journals, and finally entered Parliament with such hopes and expectations as his talents might well warrant, but which have seldom been excited by an untried member.

In the House of Commons he did quite enough to justify the warmest anticipations of his friends, and to earn for himself the name of "a rising man," that most auspicious of all names to a political aspirant.

What he might have become had life been spared, it were now vain to conjecture. He married happily, he died young. Light, lively, brilliant, the darling of every society that he entered, he was yet most beloved by those who knew him best. To me it seems that had he outlived the impetuosity of youth, he would have become something higher and better than a political partisan, however clever, or a fashionable poet, however elegant. There was through all his poetry—and it is its deepest although not its most

obvious charm—a love of the genuine and the true, a scorn for the false and the pretending, which is the foundation of all that is really good in eloquence as well as in poetry, in conduct and in character, as well as in art. The germ of the patriot and the statesman is to be found in the love of truth and the hatred of pretence; and never were they more developed than in the poems of Winthrop Mackworth Praed.

That these poems are the most graceful and finished verses of society that can be found in our language, it is impossible to doubt. At present they are so scarce that the volume from which I transcribe the greater part of the following extracts is an American collection, procured with considerable difficulty and delay from the United States. Others of the poems are taken from his own manuscripts, most kindly lent to me by one of his nearest connections, whom I am happy enough to call my friend; and one or two of the charades I have copied from the “Penny Magazine” of the author’s early friend, Mr. Charles Knight, where they are strangely enough called enigmas.

#### THE VICAR.

Some years ago, ere Time and Taste  
Had turned our parish topsy-turvey,  
When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste  
And roads as little known as scurvy,  
The man who lost his way between  
St. Mary’s Hill and Sandy Thicket,  
Was always shown across the Green,  
And guided to the Parson’s wicket.  
Back flew the bolt of lissom lath;  
Fair Margaret in her tidy kirtle  
Led the lorn traveller up the path,  
Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle;

And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,  
Upon the parlour steps collected,  
Wagged all their tails and seemed to say :  
“ Our master knows you ; you’re expected.”

Up rose the Reverend Doctor Brown,  
Up rose the Doctor’s “ winsome marrow ;”  
The lady laid her knitting down,  
Her husband clasped his ponderous Barrow.  
Whate’er the stranger’s caste or creed,  
Pundit or papist, saint or sinner,  
He found a stable for his steed,  
And welcome for himself and dinner.

If, when he reached his journey’s end,  
And warmed himself in court or college,  
He had not gained an honest friend,  
And twenty curious scraps of knowledge ;  
If he departed as he came,  
With no new light on love or liquor,  
Good sooth the traveller was to blame,  
And not the Vicarage or the Vicar.

His talk was like a stream which runs  
With rapid change from rocks to roses ;  
It slipped from politics to puns ;  
It passed from Mahomet to Moses ;  
Beginning with the laws which keep  
The planets in their radiant courses,  
And ending with some precept deep  
For dressing eels or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound divine,  
Of loud dissent the mortal terror ;  
And when by dint of page and line,  
He ’stablished truth or startled error,  
The Baptist found him far too deep ;  
The Deist sighed with saving sorrow,  
And the lean Levite went to sleep  
And dreamt of eating pork to morrow.

His sermon never said or showed  
That earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,  
Without refreshment on the road  
From Jerome or from Athanasius ;  
And sure a righteous zeal inspired  
The hand and head that penned and planned them,  
For all who understood admired,  
And some who did not understand them.

He wrote too, in a quiet way,  
Small treatises and smaller verses,  
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,  
And hints to noble lords and nurses ;  
True histories of last year's ghost ;  
Lines to a ringlet or a turban,  
And trifles for the " Morning Post,"  
And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,  
Although he had a knack of joking ;  
He did not make himself a bear,  
Although he had a taste for smoking.  
And when religious sects ran mad  
He held in spite of all his learning,  
That if a man's belief is bad  
It will not be improved by burning.

And he was kind and loved to sit  
In the low hut or garnished cottage,  
And praise the farmer's homely wit,  
And share the widow's homelier pottage.  
At his approach complaint grew mild,  
And when his hand unbarred the shutter,  
The clammy lips of fever smiled  
The welcome that they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me  
Of Julius Cæsar or of Venus ;  
From him I learned the rule of three,  
Cat's-cradle, leap-frog, and Quæ genus ;



I used to singe his powdered wig,  
 To steal the staff he put such trust in,  
 And make the puppy dance a jig  
 When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack the change! In vain I look  
 For haunts in which by boyhood trifled :  
 The level lawn, the trickling brook,  
 The trees I climbed, the beds I rifled !  
 The church is larger than before,  
 You reach it by a carriage entry ;  
 It holds three hundred people more,  
 And pews are fitted for the gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat : you'll hear  
 The doctrine of a gentle Johnian ;  
 Whose hand is white, whose voice is clear,  
 Whose tone is very Ciceronian.  
 Where is the old man laid ? Look down  
 And construe on the slab before you—  
 " Hic jacet Gulielmus Brown,  
 Vir nullâ non donandus lauro."

The man who wrote the above admirable portrait  
 was as good as he was clever. The next has equal  
 merit :

## QUINCE.

Near a small village in the West,  
 Where many very worthy people  
 Eat, drink, play whist, and do their best  
 To guard from evil church and steeple,  
 There stood—alas, it stands no more !—  
 A tenement of brick and plaster,  
 Of which for forty years and four,  
 My good friend Quince was lord and master.

Welcome was he in hut and hall,  
 To maids and matrons, peers and peasants ;  
 He won the sympathies of all  
 By making puns and making presents.

Though all the parish was at strife,  
He kept his counsel and his carriage,  
And laughed, and loved a quiet life,  
And shrunk from chancery-suits and marriage.

Sound was his claret and his head,  
Warm was his double ale and feelings ;  
His partners at the whist-club said  
That he was faultless in his dealings.  
He went to church but once a-week,  
Yet Dr. Poundtext always found him  
An upright man, who studied Greek,  
And liked to see his friends around him.

Asylums, hospitals, and schools  
He used to swear were made to cozen ;  
All who subscribed to them were fools—  
And he subscribed to half-a-dozen.  
It was his doctrine that the poor  
Were always able, never willing ;  
And so the beggar at the door  
Had first abuse and then a shilling.

Some public principles he had,  
But was no flatterer nor fretter ;  
He rapped his box when things were bad  
And said I cannot make them better.  
And much he loathed the patriot's snort,  
And much he scorned the placeman's snuffle,  
And cut the fiercest quarrels short  
With, " Patience, gentlemen, and shuffle ! "

For full ten years his pointer, Speed,  
Had couched beneath his master's table,  
For twice ten years his old white steed  
Had fattened in his master's stable.  
Old Quince averred upon his troth  
They were the ugliest beasts in Devon :  
And none knew why he fed them both  
With his own hands six days in seven.

Whene'er they heard his ring or knock  
Quicker than thought the village slatterns  
Flung down the novel, smoothed the frock,  
And took up Mrs. Glasse or patterns.  
Alice was studying baker's bills ;  
Louisa looked the queen of knitters ;  
Jane happened to be hemming frills ;  
And Nell by chance was making fritters.

But all was vain. And while decay  
Came like a tranquil moonlight o'er him,  
And found him gouty still and gay,  
With no fair nurse to bless or bore him ;  
His rugged smile and easy chair,  
His dread of matrimonial lectures,  
His wig, his stick, his powdered hair  
Were themes for very strange conjectures.

Some sages thought the stars above  
Had crazed him with excess of knowledge ;  
Some heard he had been crossed in love  
Before he came away from college ;  
Some darkly hinted that His Grace  
Did nothing, great or small, without him ;  
Some whispered, with a solemn face,  
That there was something odd about him.

I found him at three score and ten  
A single man, but bent quite double,  
Sickness was coming on him then  
To take him from a world of trouble.  
He prosed of sliding down the hill,  
Discovered he grew older daily ;  
One frosty day he made his will,  
The next he sent for Dr. Baillie.

And so he lived, and so he died ;  
When last I sat beside his pillow  
He shook my hand ; "Ah me !" he cried,  
" Penelope must wear the willow !

Tell her I hugged her rosy chain  
 While life was flickering in the socket,  
 And say that when I call again  
 I'll bring a licence in my pocket.

"I've left my house and grounds to Fag,  
 (I hope his master's shoes will suit him!)  
 And I've bequeathed to you my nag,  
 To feed him for my sake, or shoot him.  
 The vicar's wife will take old Fox;  
 She'll find him an uncommon mouser,  
 And let her husband have my box,  
 My Bible and my Assmanshäuser.

"Whether I ought to die or not  
 My doctors cannot quite determine;  
 It's only clear that I shall rot  
 And be, like Priam, food for vermin.  
 My debts are paid. But Nature's debt  
 Almost escaped my recollection!  
 Tom, we shall meet again; and yet  
 I cannot leave you my direction!"

The next poem, which describes a first flirtation (for it hardly deserves the name of first love), is as true as if it had been written in prose by Jane Austen.

#### THE BELLE OF THE BALL.

Years, years ago, ere yet my dreams,  
 Had been of being wise or witty;  
 Ere I had done with writing themes,  
 Or yawned o'er this infernal 'Chitty,'  
 Years, years ago, while all my joys,  
 Were in my fowling-piece and filly,  
 In short, while I was yet a boy,  
 I fell in love with Laura Lilly.

I saw her at a country ball  
 There where the sound of flute and fiddle,  
 Gave signal, sweet in that old hall,  
 Of hands across and down the middle;

Hers was the subtlest spell by far,  
Of all that sets young hearts romancing,  
She was our queen, our rose, our star,  
And when she danced—Oh, heaven ! her dancing !

Dark was her hair ; her hand was white ;  
Her voice was exquisitely tender ;  
Her eyes were full of liquid light ;  
I never saw a waist so slender.  
Her every look, her every smile,  
Shot right and left a score of arrows ;  
I thought 'twas Venus from her isle,  
And wondered where she'd left her sparrows !

She talked of politics or prayers,  
Of Southey's prose, or Wordsworth's sonnets,  
Of daggers, or of dancing bears,  
Of battles, or the last new bonnets ;  
By candle-light, at twelve o'clock,  
To me it mattered not a tittle,  
If those bright lips had quoted Locke,  
I might have thought they murmured Little.

Through sunny May, through sultry June,  
I loved her with a love eternal ;  
I spoke her praises to the moon,  
I wrote them for the Sunday journal.  
My mother laughed ; I soon found out  
That ancient ladies have no feeling.  
My father frowned ; but how should gout  
Find any happiness in kneeling ?

She was the daughter of a dean,  
Rich, fat, and rather apoplectic ;  
She had one brother just thirteen,  
Whose colour was extremely hectic ;  
Her grandmother for many a year,  
Had fed the parish with her bounty ;  
Her second cousin was a peer,  
And lord-lieutenant of the county.

But titles and the three per cents,  
And mortgages and great relations,  
And India Bonds, and tithes, and rents,  
Oh ! what are they to love's sensations ?  
Black eyes, fair foreheads, clustering locks,  
Such wealth, such honours Cupid chooses ;  
He cares as little for the stocks,  
As Baron Rothschild for the Muses.

She sketched : the vale, the wood, the beach  
Grew lovelier from her pencil's shading ;  
She botanized : I envied each  
Young blossom in her boudoir fading ;  
She warbled Handel : it was grand,  
She made the Catalani jealous ;  
She touched the organ : I could stand  
For hours and hours and blow the bellows.

She kept an album, too, at home,  
Well filled with all an album's glories ;  
Paintings of butterflies and Rome ;  
Patterns for trimming ; Persian stories ;  
Soft songs to Julia's cockatoo ;  
Fierce odes to famine and to slaughter,  
And autographs of Prince Le Boo,  
And recipes for elder-water.

And she was flattered, worshipped, bored,  
Her steps were watched, her dress was noted,  
Her poodle dog was quite adored,  
Her sayings were extremely quoted.  
She laughed, and every heart was glad  
As if the taxes were abolished ;  
She frowned, and every look was sad,  
As if the opera were demolished.

She smiled on many just for fun—  
I knew that there was nothing in it ;  
I was the first, the only one,  
Her heart had thought of for a minute.

I knew it, for she told me so,  
In phrase that was divinely moulded ;—  
She wrote a charming hand, and oh !  
How neatly all her notes were folded.

Our love was like most other loves,—  
A little glow, a little shiver ;  
A rosebud and a pair of gloves,  
And “ Fly not yet,” upon the river ;  
Some jealousy of some one’s heir ;  
Some hopes of dying broken-hearted ;  
A miniature ; a lock of hair ;  
The usual vows ;—and then we parted.

We parted : months and years rolled by,  
We met again some summers after ;  
Our parting was all sob and sigh !  
Our meeting was all mirth and laughter !  
For in my heart’s most secret cell  
There had been many other lodgers ;  
And she was not the ball-room belle,  
But only Mistress—something—Rogers !

The political satire is equally good-humoured, equally characteristic, and equally clever, perhaps cleverer—if that can be—than these specimens. Some of the objects of that keen and pungent verse still remain alive, although many are, like the author, removed from this transitory scene. I abstain, therefore, from inserting what might by possibility cause pain. The following cavalier version of the great fight of Marston Moor is transcribed from the author’s own manuscript, apparently the first sketch. It is wonderful how little that fertile and fluent pen found to alter or to amend.

To horse ! to horse ! Sir Nicholas, the clarion's note is high !  
To horse ! to horse ! Sir Nicholas, the big drum makes reply !  
Ere this hath Lucas marched, with his gallant cavaliers,  
And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter in our ears.  
To horse ! to horse ! Sir Nicholas ! White Guy is at the door,  
And the raven wets his beak o'er the field of Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice from her brief and broken prayer,  
And she brought a silken banner down the narrow turret-stair ;  
Oh ! many were the tears that those radiant eyes had shed,  
As she traced the bright word "Glory," in the gay and glancing  
thread ;  
And mournful was the smile which o'er those lovely features  
ran,  
As she said, "It is your lady's gift, unfurl it in the van !"

"It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and boldest ride,  
Midst the steel-clad files of Skippon, the black dragoons of  
Pride ;

The recreant heart of Fairfax shall feel a sickly qualm,  
And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder psalm ;  
When they see my lady's gew-gaw flaunt proudly on their wing,  
And hear her loyal soldier's shout 'For God and for the King.'"

'Tis noon. The ranks are broken, along the royal line  
They fly, the braggarts of the court ! the bullies of the Rhine !  
Stout Langdale's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's helm is  
down,

And Rupert sheathes his rapier with a curse and with a frown,  
And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in their flight,  
"The German boar, had better far, have supped in York to  
night."

The knight is left alone, his steel-cap cleft in twain,  
His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many a gory stain ;  
Yet still he waves his banner, and cries amid the rout,  
"For Church and King, fair gentlemen ! spur on and fight it  
out !"

And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now he hums a  
stave,  
And now he quotes a stage play, and now he fells a knave.



God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no thought of fear;  
 God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! for fearful odds are here!  
 The rebels hem thee in, and at every cut and thrust,  
 "Down, down," they cry, "with Belial! down with him to the  
 dust."

"I would," quoth grim old Oliver, "that Belial's trusty  
 sword,  
 This day were doing battle for the Saints and for the Lord!"

The Lady Alice sits with her maidens in her bower,  
 The grey-haired warder watches from the castle's topmost  
 tower;

"What news? what news, old Hubert?"—"The battle's lost  
 and won;

The royal troops are melting, like mist before the sun!  
 And a wounded man approaches;—I'm blind and cannot see,  
 Yet sure I am that sturdy step, my master's step must be!"

"I've brought thee back thy banner, wench, from as rude and  
 red a fray,

As e'er was proof of soldier's thew, or theme for minstrel's lay!  
 Here, Hubert, bring the silver bowl, and liquor quantum suff.  
 I'll make a shift to drain it yet, ere I part with boots and buff;—  
 Though Guy through many a gaping wound is breathing forth  
 his life,  
 And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and faithful wife!

"Sweet! we will fill our money bags, and freight a ship for  
 France,

And mourn in merry Paris for this poor land's mischance;  
 For if the worst befall me, why better axe and rope,  
 Than life with Lenthall for a king, and Peters for a pope!  
 Alas! alas! my gallant Guy!—curse on the crop-eared boor,  
 Who sent me with my standard, on foot from Marston Moor!"

I pass some poems that have been greatly praised,  
 "The Red Fishermen," "Lilian," and "The Trouba-  
 dour," to come to the charades—the charming cha-  
 rades—which, in their form of short narrative poems,

he may be said to have invented. I insert a few taken almost at random from his brilliant collection :

## I.

I graced Don Pedro's revelry,  
All dressed in fire and feather ;  
When loveliness and chivalry,  
Were met to feast togethen.  
He flung the slave who moved the lid,  
A purse of maravedis ;—  
And this that gallant Spaniard did,  
For me and for the ladies.

He vowed a vow, that noble knight,  
Before he went to table,  
To make his only sport the fight,  
His only couch the stable,  
Till he had dragged as he was bid  
Five score of Turks to Cadiz ;—  
And this that gallant Spaniard did,  
For me and for the ladies.

To ride through mountains, where my *First*  
A banquet would be reckoned ;  
Through deserts where to quench their thirst  
Men vainly turn my *Second*.  
To leave the gates of fair Madrid,  
And dare the gates of Hades ;—  
And this that gallant Spaniard did,  
For me and for the ladies.

## II.

Morning is beaming o'er brake and bower ;  
Hark ! to the chimes from yonder tower !  
Call ye my *First* from her chamber now,  
With her snowy veil and her jewelled brow.

Lo ! where my *Second* in gorgeous array,  
Leads from his stable her beautiful bay,  
Looking for her as he curvets by  
With an arching neck and a glancing eye.

Spread is the banquet and studied the song,  
Ranged in meet order the menial throng,  
Jerome is ready with book and with stole  
And the maidens strew flowers,—but where is my *Whole*?

Look to the hill ! is he climbing its side ?  
Look to the stream ! is he crossing its tide ?  
Out on the false one ! he comes not yet—  
Lady, forget him ! yea scorn and forget !

The next is a surname, and one of the most beautiful compliments ever offered to a great poet.

## III.

Come from my *First*, aye, come !  
The battle dawn is nigh ;  
And the screaming trump and the thundering drum  
Are calling thee to die !

Fight as thy father fought ;  
Fall as thy father fell ;  
Thy task is taught ; thy shroud is wrought ;  
So ; forward and farewell !

Toll ye my *Second* ! toll !  
Fling high the flambeau's light ;  
And sing the hymn for a parted soul  
Beneath the silent night !

The wreath upon his head,  
The cross upon his breast,  
Let the prayer be said, and the tear be shed,  
So,—take him to his rest !

Call ye my *Whole*, ay, call  
The lord of lute and lay ;  
And let him greet the sable pall  
With a noble song to-day :

Go, call him by his name !  
No fitter hand may crave  
To light the flame of a soldier's fame  
On the turf of a soldier's grave.

I add a few more of these graceful pleasantries :

## IV.

He talked of daggers and of darts,  
Of passions and of pains,  
Of weeping eyes and wounded hearts,  
Of kisses and of chains ;  
He said, though love was kin to grief,  
He was not born to grieve ;  
He said, though many rued belief,  
She safely might believe.  
But still the lady shook her head,  
And swore by yea and nay,  
My *Whole* was all that he had said  
And all that he could say.

He said my *First* whose silent ear  
Was slowly wandering by,  
Veiled in a vapour faint and far  
Through the unfathomed sky.  
Was like the smile whose rosy light  
Across her young lips passed,  
Yet, oh ! it was not half so bright,  
It changed not half so fast.  
But still the lady shook her head,  
And swore by yea and nay,  
My *Whole* was all that he had said  
And all that he could say.

And then he set a cypress wreath  
Upon his raven hair,  
And drew his rapier from its sheath—  
Which made the lady stare ;  
And said his life blood's purple glow  
My *Second* there should dim,  
If she he loved and worshipped so,  
Would only weep for him.  
But still the lady shook her head,  
And swore by yea and nay,  
My *Whole* was all that he had said,  
And all that he could say.

## V.

My *First* came forth in booted state,  
For fair Valencia bound ;  
And smiled to feel my *Second's* weight,  
And hear its creaking sound.  
“ And here's a gaoler sweet,” quoth he,  
“ You cannot bribe or cozen ;  
To keep one ward in custody  
Wise men will forge a dozen.”  
But daybreak saw a lady guide  
My *Whole* across the plain,  
With a handsome cavalier beside,  
To hold her bridle-rein :  
And “ blessings on the bonds,” quoth he,  
Which wrinkled age imposes,  
If woman must a prisoner be,  
Her chain should be of roses.”

## VI.

My *First* was dark o'er earth and air,  
As dark as she could be !  
The stars that gemmed her ebon hair  
Were only two or three :  
King Cole saw thrice as many there  
As you or I could see.  
“ Away, King Cole,” mine hostess said,  
“ Flagon and flask are dry ;  
Your steed is neighing in the shed,  
For he knows a storm is nigh.”  
She set my *Second* on his head,  
And she set it all awry.

## VII.

Sir Hilary charged at Agincourt,—  
Sooth 'twas an awful day !  
And though in that old age of sport  
The rufflers of the camp and court  
Had little time to pray,  
'Tis said Sir Hilary muttered there  
Two syllables by way of prayer.

My *First* to all the brave and proud  
Who see to-morrow's sun ;  
My *Next* with her cold and quiet cloud  
To those who find their dewy shroud  
Before to-day's be done ;  
And both together to all blue eyes  
That weep when a warrior nobly dies.

This charade is still a mystery to me. Solve it, fair  
readers !

## X.

## PEASANT POETS.

JOHN CLARE.

NEARLY at the same period, when Macaulay and Praed sprang into public life, the world of letters was startled by the announcement of a new poet, a Northamptonshire peasant, whose claims to distinction were vouched for by judges of no ordinary sagacity, little given to mistake, and by no means addicted to enthusiasm. His character was blameless and amiable. Although of a frame little suited to severity of toil, he had for many years supported his aged parents by manual labour, and in bringing his powers into the light of day, he had undergone more than the ordinary amount of delay, of suspense, of disappointment, and of "the hope deferred that maketh the heart sick."

From the prefaces to his three publications, the "Poems, Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery," "The Village Minstrel," and "The Rural Muse," his early history may be collected. At the age of thirteen, when he could read tolerably, and knew something of writing and arithmetic, he met, accidentally, with "Thomson's Seasons," a book which not only awakened in his mind the love of poetry, but led him at once to the kind of poetry in which, from

situation and from natural aptitude, he was most likely to succeed. For another thirteen years his brief leisure was filled with attempts more or less successful, to clothe, in the language of verse, his own feelings and observations. His chief trial, during this long probation, must have been his entire loneliness of mind—the absence of all companionship or sympathy. At this time he met with the “Patty” whom he afterwards married, and, in the hope of improving his circumstances, began to consider seriously about publishing a small volume by subscription; and having ascertained that the expense of three hundred copies of a prospectus would not be more than a pound, he set himself resolutely to work, and by hard labour, day and night, at length succeeded in accumulating the required sum.

“I distributed my papers,” said the poor author, “but as I could get no way of pushing them into higher circles than those with whom I was acquainted, they consequently passed off as quietly as if they had still been in my possession, unprinted and not seen.” For a long while the number of subscribers stood at seven. At length, however, a copy of the proposals won their way to London. Messrs. Taylor and Hessey gave twenty pounds for the Poems; and, what was far better for the author, contrived to obtain for them immediate publicity.

The little volume was striking in what it had and in what it wanted. The very struggle between original thought and imperfect expression sometimes resulted in happiness and beauty. One thing was certain: John Clare was no imitator. Persons of taste and generosity in the higher classes took him by the



hand. Lord Exeter sent for him to Burleigh, and hearing that he earned thirty pounds per annum by field labour, settled an annuity of fifteen pounds upon him, with a view to his devoting half his time to agricultural occupations, and half to literary pursuits. This benevolent proposal, which sounds so hopefully, proved a notable failure, chiefly in consequence of our national failing of running after everything and everybody that has attained a sufficient portion of notoriety. Poor Clare became as great a lion as if he had committed two or three murders. He was frequently interrupted, as often as three times a-day, during his labours in the harvest-field, to gratify the curiosity of admiring visitors ; and a plan, excellent in its principle, was abandoned perforce. Other wealthy and liberal noblemen joined in the good work. Lord Spencer gave ten pounds per annum. A subscription was set on foot by Lord Radstock, to which the present King of the Belgians, Lord Fitzwilliam, and Lord John Russell contributed generously, and which, together with the profits of his works—for "The Village Minstrel" had now been published—realised for him altogether an annual income of five-and-forty pounds. This appeared affluence to our poet, and he married.

Praised by the "Quarterly," and befriended by noble patrons and generous booksellers, his prospects seemed more than commonly smiling. His third publication, too, "The Rural Muse," in spite of its unpromising title, more than justified all that had been done for him. The improvement was most remarkable. That he should gain a greater command over language, a choicer selection of words, and the knowledge of grammatical construction, which he had wanted before,

was to be expected ; but the habit of observation seemed to have increased in fineness and accuracy in proportion as he gained the power of expression, and the delicacy of his sentiment kept pace with the music of his versification. What can be closer to nature than his description of the nightingale's nest ?

Up this green woodland ride let's softly rove,  
And list the Nightingale ; she dwells just here.  
Hush ! let the wood-gate softly clap, for fear  
The noise might drive her from her home of love ;  
For here I've heard her many a merry year,  
At morn, at eve, nay, all the livelong day,  
As though she lived on song. This very spot  
Just where that old man's-beard all wildly trails  
Rude arbours o'er the road, and stops the way ;  
And where the child its blue-bell flowers hath got,  
Laughing and creeping through the mossy rails ;  
There have I hunted like a very boy,  
Creeping on hands and knees through matted thorn,  
To find her nest, and see her feed her young.  
And vainly did I many hours employ :  
All seemed as hidden as a thought unborn.  
And where those crumpling fern-leaves ramp among  
The hazel's under boughs, I've nestled down  
And watched her while she sang ; and her renown  
Hath made me marvel that so famed a bird  
Should have no better dress than russet brown.  
Her wings would tremble in her extasy,  
And feathers stand on end, as 'twere with joy,  
And mouth wide open to release her heart  
Of its out-sobbing songs. The happiest part  
Of Summer's fame she shared, for so to me  
Did happy fancies shapen her employ.  
But if I touched a bush, or scarcely stirred,  
All in a moment stopt. I watched in vain :  
The timid bird had left the hazel bush,  
And oft in distance hid to sing again.

Lost in a wilderness of listening leaves,  
 Rich extasy would pour its luscious strain,  
 'Till envy spurred the emulating Thrush  
 To start less wild and scarce inferior songs ;  
 For while of half the year Care him bereaves,  
 To damp the ardour of his speckled breast,  
 The Nightingale to Summer's life belongs,  
 And naked trees and Winter's nipping wrongs  
 Are strangers to her music and her rest.  
 Her joys are ever green, her world is wide !  
 Hark ! there she is, as usual. Let's be hush ;  
 For in this black-thorn clump, if rightly guessed,  
 Her curious house is hidden. Part aside  
 Those hazel branches in a gentle way,  
 And stoop right cautious 'neath the rustling boughs,  
 For we will have another search to-day,  
 And hunt this fern-strewn thorn-clump round and round,  
 And where this reeded wood-grass idly bows  
 We'll wade right through ; it is a likely nook.  
 In such like spots, and often on the ground  
 They'll build where rude boys never think to look ;—  
 Aye, as I live ! her secret nest is here  
 Upon this white-thorn stump ! I've searched about  
 For hours in vain. There, put that bramble by,—  
 Nay, trample on its branches, and get near.  
 How subtle is the bird ! She started out,  
 And raised a plaintive note of danger nigh  
 Ere we were past the brambles ; and now, near  
 Her nest, she sudden stops, as choking fear  
 That might betray her home. So even now  
 We'll leave it as we found it ; safety's guard  
 Of pathless solitudes shall keep it still.

\* \* \* \* \*

We will not plunder music of its dower,  
 Nor turn this spot of happiness to thrall,  
 For melody seems hid in every flower  
 That blossoms near thy home. These bluebells all  
 Seem bowing with the beautiful in song ;  
 And gaping cuckoo-flower, with spotted leaves,  
 Seems blushing of the singing it has heard.

How curious is the nest ! No other bird  
 Uses such loose materials, or weaves  
 Its dwelling in such spots ! Dead oaken leaves  
 Are placed without, and velvet moss within.  
 And little scraps of grass, and scant and spare,  
 What hardly seem materials, down and hair ;  
 For from men's haunts she nothing seems to win.

\* \* \* \* \*

Snug lie her curious eggs, in number five,  
 Of deadened green, or rather olive-brown,  
 And the old prickly thorn-bush guards them well.  
 So here we'll leave them, still unknown to wrong,  
 As the old woodland's legacy of song.

Is not this nature itself ! And again another nest,  
 as true every whit in its difference.

#### THE PETTICAP'S NEST.

Well ! in my many walks I've rarely found  
 A place less likely for a bird to form  
 Its nest ; close by the rut-gulled waggon-road,  
 And on the almost bare foot-trodden ground,  
 With scarce a clump of grass to keep it warm,  
 Where not a thistle spreads its spears abroad,  
 Or prickly bush to shield it from harm's way ;  
 And yet so snugly made, that none may spy  
 It out, save peradventure. You and I  
 Had surely passed it in our walk-to day  
 Had chance not led us by it ! Nay, e'en now,  
 Had not the old bird heard us trampling by,  
 And fluttered out, we had not seen it lie  
 Brown as the road-way side. Small bits of hay  
 Pluckt from the old propt haystack's pleachy brow,  
 And withered leaves, make up its outward wall,  
 Which from the gnarled oak-dotterel yearly fall,  
 And in the old hedge-bottom rot away.  
 Built like an oven, through a little hole,  
 Scarcely admitting e'en two fingers in,  
 Hard to discern, the birds snug entrance win.

'Tis lined with feathers, warm as silken stole,  
 Softer than seats of down for painless ease,  
 And full of eggs scarce bigger ev'n than peas.  
 Here's one most delicate, with spots as small  
 As dust, and of a faint and pinky red.

\* \* \* \* \*

And they are left to many dangerous ways.  
 A green grasshopper's jump might break the shells;  
 Yet lowing oxen pass them morn and night,  
 And restless sheep around them hourly stray.

\* \* \* \* \*

I add yet another :

#### THE YELLOWHAMMER'S NEST.

Just by the wooden bridge a bird flew up,  
 Seen by the cow-boy as he scrambled down  
 To reach the misty dewberry. Let us stoop  
 And seek its nest. The brook we need not dread,—  
 'Tis scarcely deep enough a bee to drown,  
 As it sings harmless o'er its pebbly bed.  
 —Aye, here it is! Stuck close beside the bank,  
 Beneath the bunch of grass that spindles rank  
 Its husk-seeds tall and high : 'tis rudely planned  
 Of bleached stubbles and the withered fare  
 That last year's harvest left upon the land,  
 Lined thinly with the horse's sable hair.  
 Five eggs, pen-scribbled o'er with ink their shells,  
 Resembling writing scrawls, which Fancy reads  
 As Nature's pöesy and pastoral spells :  
 They are the Yellowhammer's ; and she dwells,  
 Most poet like, 'mid brooks and flowery weeds.

\* \* \* \* \*

I question if the great bird-painter, Wilson, or our own Australian ornithologist, Mr. Gould (he is a Berkshire man, I am proud to say), or Audubon, or White of Selborne, or Mr. Waterton himself—and all those careful inquirers into nature are more or less poets, seldom as they have used the conventional language

of poetry—I question if any of these eminent writers have ever exceeded the minuteness and accuracy of these birds' nests.

The Poem called "Insects" is scarcely less beautiful.

These tiny loiterers on the barley's beard,  
 And happy units of a numerous herd  
 Of playfellows, the laughing summer brings ;  
 Mocking the sunshine on their glittering wings,  
 How merrily they creep, and run, and fly !  
 No kin they bear to labour's drudgery,  
 Smoothing the velvet of the pale hedge-rose,  
 And where they fly for dinner no one knows ;  
 The dew-drops feed them not ; they love the shine  
 Of noon, whose suns may bring them golden wine.  
 All day they're playing in their Sunday dress ;  
 When night reposes they can do no less !  
 Then to the heath-bell's purple hood they fly,  
 And, like to princes in their slumbers, lie  
 Secure from rain and dropping dews, and all  
 On silken beds and roomy painted hall.  
 So merrily they spend their summer day,  
 Now in the corn-fields, now the new-mown hay.  
 One almost fancies that such happy things,  
 With coloured hoods and richly-burnished wings,  
 Are fairy folk in splendid masquerade  
 Disguised, as if of mortal folk afraid,  
 Keeping their joyous pranks a mystery still,  
 Lest glaring day should do their secrets ill.

And as I have said above, other qualities too had supervened. The delicacy of sentiment in the following stanzas bears no touch of the uncultivated peasant.

#### FIRST LOVE'S RECOLLECTIONS.

First love will with the heart remain  
 When all its hopes are by,  
 As frail rose-blossoms still retain  
 Their fragrance when they die.

And joy's first dreams will haunt the mind  
With shades from whence they sprung,  
As summer leaves the stems behind  
On which spring's blossoms hung.

Mary ! I dare not call thee dear,  
I've lost that right so long,  
Yet once again I vex thine ear  
With memory's idle song.  
Had time and change not blotted out  
The love of former days,  
Thou wert the first that I should doubt  
Of pleasing with my praise.

When honied tokens from each tongue  
Told with what truth we loved,  
How rapturous to thy lips I clung,  
Whilst nought but smiles reproved.  
But now, methinks if one kind word  
Was whispered in thine ear,  
Thou'dst startle like an untamed bird,  
And blush with wilder fear.

How loth to part, how fond to meet,  
Had we two used to be,  
At sunset with what eager feet  
I hastened unto thee !  
Scarce nine days passed us ere we met,  
In spring, nay, wintry weather ;  
Now nine years' suns have risen and set  
Nor found us once together.

Thy face was so familiar grown,  
Thyself so often by,  
A moment's memory when alone,  
Would bring thee to mine eye.  
But now my very dreams forget  
That witching look to trace ;  
And though thy beauty lingers yet,  
It wears a stranger's face.

I felt a pride to name thy name,  
But now that pride hath flown ;  
My words e'en seem to blush for shame  
That own I love thee on.  
I felt I then thy heart did share,  
Nor urged a binding vow ;  
But much I doubt if thou couldst spare  
One word of kindness now.

And what is now my name to thee,  
Though once nought seemed so dear ?  
Perhaps a jest in hours of glee,  
To please some idle ear.  
And yet like counterfeits with me  
Impressions linger on,  
Though all the gilded finery  
That passed for truth is gone.

Ere the world smiled upon my lays,  
A sweeter meed was mine ;  
Thy blushing look of ready praise  
Was raised at every line.  
But now methinks thy fervent love  
Is changed to scorn severe ;  
And songs that other hearts approve,  
Seem discord to thine ear.

When last thy gentle cheek I pressed  
And heard thee feign adieu,  
I little thought that seeming jest  
Would prove a word so true.  
A fate like this hath oft befell  
E'en loftier hopes than ours ;—  
Spring bids full many buds to swell,  
That ne'er can grow to flowers.

That was John Clare's last volume, published in 1839, and although generously noticed by the press, it did not sell. Perhaps the very imperfections of the earlier works had made a part of their charm. There is a certain pleasure in being called upon to



show indulgence to one whose high gifts are indisputable. Besides the complacency always attending a sense of superiority of any kind, it flatters one's self-love most agreeably (I am speaking of readers, not of critics,) to be able to detect and to point out beauties under the veil of defects. Still greater was the pride of being amongst the first discoverers of such endowments. With the novelty, that pleasure vanished. Every child boasts the violet of his own finding, and cherishes and caresses it—while it is fresh ; then it disappears and is no more thought of. Woe to us if so we treat a still tenderer flower !

However it happened the popularity diminished as the merit increased. The public, usually so just in its ultimate estimate of authors, failed in this particular instance to recognise the strong and honest claim upon a fair and liberal patronage possessed by one who had been taken from his own humble avocation, from the homely work but the certain reward of the plough, to cultivate the always uncertain, and too often barren and unthankful fields of literature. Such, I fear, poor Clare found them. Improvement had come, but with improvement came sickness and anxiety. The little income had soon been found inadequate to the wants of his aged parents, and the demands of an increasing family ; for they will marry, these poets ! Poverty overwhelmed him, and sickness—and they who still took a kindly interest in one who had crept so close to the heart of nature in coppice and in field—heard with sorrowful sympathy that the sickness was of the mind.

It has been said that pecuniary difficulties were the real cause of the malady, and that the removal

of all anxiety as to the means of living would at once cure the delusions under which he labours, and restore him to his home and to his family. I wish it were so, for I think if that were true, (and certainly the fact ought to be ascertained, as nearly as anything of that nature can be ascertained by medical examination,) that they who so benevolently lent their aid to lift him from his original obscurity, would, aided by others of a like spirit, step forward to rescue from a still deeper darkness one whose talents had so well justified their former bounty.

In the meanwhile it is an alleviation to the painful feeling excited by such a narrative to know that the poor poet, perfectly gentle and harmless, enjoys in the asylum where he is placed, the wise freedom of person and of action which is the triumph of humanity and of science in the present day.

A few years ago he was visited by a friend of mine, himself a poet of the people, who gave me a most interesting account of the then state of his intellect. His delusions were at that time very singular in their character. Whatever he read, whatever recurred to him from his former reading, or happened to be mentioned in conversation, became impressed on his mind as a thing that he had witnessed and acted in. My friend was struck with a narrative of the execution of Charles the First, recounted by Clare, as a transaction that occurred yesterday, and of which he was an eye-witness—a narrative the most graphic and minute, with an accuracy as to costume and manners far exceeding what would probably have been at his command if sane. It is such a lucidity as the disciples of Mesmer claim for clairvoyance. Or he

would relate the battle of the Nile, and the death of Lord Nelson with the same perfect keeping, especially as to seamanship, fancying himself one of the sailors who had been in the action, and dealing out nautical phrases with admirable exactness and accuracy, although it is doubtful if he ever saw the sea in his life.

About three years before my friend's visit, Mr. Cyrus Redding went to see him, and has given a very interesting description of the poet, and of his state of mind, in the "English Journal." He says that during his stay he appeared free from all delusion, except once when some allusion was made to prize-fighting, and represents him as regretting the absence of female society, and as continuing to write verse of much merit. I have myself some fragments, written with a pencil, which show all his old power over rhythm.\*

---

\* About a hundred years ago, Christopher Smart, seized with a similar malady, confined in a madhouse, and deprived of the use of pen, ink, and paper, contrived to indent his Song of David upon the wainscot with the end of a key. I add three stanzas of this fine poem as a psychological curiosity. Times are changed for the better. John Clare has all encouragement to write as often and as much as he chooses.

He sang of God, the mighty source  
Of all things, the stupendous force,  
On which all strength depends ;  
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes  
All period, power, and enterprise,  
Commences, reigns, and ends.  
The world, the clustering spheres he made,  
The glorious light, the soothing shade,  
Dale, champaign, grove, and hill ;  
The multitudinous abyss,  
Where Secresy remains in bliss,  
And Wisdom hides her skill.

[Tell

Mr. Redding gives several examples of these poems. They are distinguished from those of his earlier days by several differences, especially by the change from the rich level meadows of Northamptonshire to the hill and dale of Epping Forest. Here is one which is said to be reminiscent of his Patty :

Maid of Walkherd meet again  
 By the wilding in the glen ;  
 By the oak against the door,  
 Where we often met before.  
 By thy bosom's heaving snow,  
 By thy fondness love shall know ;  
 Maid of Walkherd meet again  
 By the wilding in the glen.  
 By thy hand of slender make,  
 By thy love I'll ne'er forsake,  
 By thy heart I'll ne'er betray,  
 Let me kiss thy tears away.  
 I will live and love thee ever,  
 Love thee and forsake thee never,  
 Though far in other lands to be,  
 Yet never far from love and thee.

The next specimen has much of his fine observation of natural objects, and his old love of birds breaks through everything :—

The forest meets the blessings of the spring,  
 The chestnut throws her sticky buds away,  
 And shows her pleasant leaves and snow-white flowers.

\* \* \* \* \*

Tell them I Am, Jehovah said,  
 To Moses ; whilst earth heard in dread,  
 And smitten to the heart,  
 At once above, beneath, around,  
 All Nature, without voice or sound,  
 Replied, O Lord, Thou art !

Devotional poetry has nothing grander even in Milton.

I've often tried, when tending sheep or cow,  
With bits of grass and peels of oaten straw,  
To whistle like the birds. The thrush would start  
To hear her song of praise, and fly away ;  
The blackbird never cared, but sang again ;  
The nightingale's pure song I could not try,  
And when the thrush would mock her song, she paused,  
And sang another song no bird could do :  
She sang when all were done, and beat them all.  
I've often sat, and watched them half the day  
Behind the hedgerow thorn or bullace-tree ;  
I thought how nobly I would act in crowds,  
The woods and fields were all the books I knew,  
And every leisure thought was love or fame.

There is some intention, I believe, of publishing a volume of these poems. It will be interesting on many accounts, and for the sake of the poet and of his family, I heartily wish it every success.

We cannot, I repeat, do too much for John Clare; he has a claim to it as a man of genius suffering under the severest visitation of Providence. But let us beware of indulging ourselves by encouraging the class of pseudo-peasant poets who spring up on every side, and are amongst the most pitiable objects in creation. One knows them by sight upon the path-way, from their appearance of vagrant misery--an appearance arising from the sense of injustice and of oppression under which they suffer, the powerless feeling that they have claims which the whole world refuses to acknowledge, a perpetual and growing sense of injury. It is a worse insanity than John Clare's, and one for which there is no asylum. Victims to their own day-dreams are they! They have heard of Burns and of Chatterton; they have a certain knack of rhyming, although even that is by no

means necessary to such a delusion ; they find an audience whom their intense faith in their own power conspires to delude ; and their quiet, their content, their every prospect is ruined for ever. It is this honest and unconquerable persuasion of their own genius that makes it impossible to reason with or convince them. Their faith in their own powers—their racking sense of the injustice of all about them, makes one's heart ache. It is impossible for the sternest or the sturdiest teller of painful truths to disenchant them, and the consequence is as obvious as it is miserable. For that shadow every substance is foregone. They believe poetry to be their work and they will do no other. Then comes utter poverty. They haunt the ale-house, they drink, they sicken, they starve. I have known many such.

Happily there is one cure, not for individual cases, but for the entire class ; a slow but a sure remedy. Let the sunlight in, and the night-phantoms vanish. Education, wide and general, not mere learning to read, but making discreet and wise use of the power, and the nuisance will be abated at once and for ever. Let our peasants become as intelligent as our artisans, and we shall have no more prodigies, no more martyrs.

## XI.

## AUTHORS ASSOCIATED WITH PLACES.

## A COUNTRY WEDDING—MY FIRST VISIT TO LONDON.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

MOST undoubtedly I was a spoilt child. When I recollect certain passages of my thrice happy early life, I cannot have the slightest doubt about the matter, although it contradicts all foregone conclusions, all nursery and school-room morality, to say so. But facts are stubborn things. Spoilt I was. Everybody spoilt me, most of all the person whose power in that way was greatest, the dear papa himself. Not content with spoiling me in-doors, he spoilt me out. How well I remember his carrying me round the orchard on his shoulder, holding fast my little three-year-old feet, whilst the little hands hung on to his pig-tail, which I called my bridle (those were days of pig-tails), hung so fast, and tugged so heartily, that sometimes the ribbon would come off between my fingers, and send his hair floating, and the powder flying down his back. That climax of mischief was the crowning joy of all. I can hear our shouts of laughter now.

Nor were these my only rides. This dear papa of

mine, whose gay and careless temper all the professional etiquette of the world could never tame into the staid gravity proper to a doctor of medicine, happened to be a capital horseman ; and abandoning the close carriage, which, at that time, was the regulation conveyance of a physician, almost wholly to my mother, used to pay his country visits on a favourite blood-mare, whose extreme docility and gentleness tempted him, after certain short trials round our old course, the orchard, into having a pad constructed, perched upon which I might occasionally accompany him, when the weather was favourable, and the distance not too great. A groom, who had been bred up in my grandfather's family, always attended us ; and I do think that both Brown Bess and George liked to have me with them almost as well as my father did. The old servant proud, as grooms always are of a fleet and beautiful horse, was almost as proud of my horsemanship ; for I, cowardly enough, Heaven knows, in after years, was then too young and too ignorant for fear—if it could have been possible to have had any sense of danger when strapped so tightly to my father's saddle, and enclosed so fondly by his strong and loving arm. Very delightful were those rides across the breezy Hampshire downs on a sunny summer morning ; and grieved was I when a change of residence from a small town to a large one, and going among strange people who did not know our ways, put an end to this perfectly harmless, if somewhat unusual, pleasure.

But the dear papa was not my only spoiler. His example was followed, as bad examples are pretty sure to be, by the rest of the household. My maid



Nancy, for instance, before we left Hampshire, married a young farmer ; and nothing would serve her but I must be bridesmaid. And so it was settled.

She was married from her own home, about four miles from our house, and was to go to her husband's after the ceremony. I remember the whole scene as if it were yesterday ! How my father took me himself to the churchyard gate, where the procession was formed, and how I walked next to the young couple hand in hand with the bridegroom's man, no other than the village blacksmith, a giant of six feet three, who might have served as a model for Hercules. Much trouble had he to stoop low enough to reach down to my hand ; and many were the rustic jokes passed upon the disproportioned pair, who might fitly have represented Brobdignag and Lilliput. My tall colleague proved, however, as well-natured as giants commonly are everywhere but in fairy tales, and took as good care of his little partner as if she had been a proper match for him in age and size.

In this order, followed by the parents on both sides, and a due number of uncles, aunts, and cousins, we entered the church, where I held the glove with all the gravity and importance proper to my office ; and so contagious is emotion, and so accustomed was I to sympathise with Nancy, that when the bride cried, I could not help crying for company. But it was a love-match, and between smiles and blushes Nancy's tears soon disappeared, and so by the same contagion did mine. The happy husband helped his pretty wife into her own chaise-cart, my friend the blacksmith lifted me in after her, and we drove gaily to the large, comfortable farm-house where her future life was to be spent.

It was a bright morning in May, and I still remember when we drove up to the low wall which parted the front garden from the winding village road, the mixture of affection and honest pride which lighted up the face of the owner. The square, substantial brick house, covered with a vine, the brick porch garlanded with honeysuckles and sweetbriar, the espalier apple-trees on either side the path in full flower, the double row of thrift with its dull pink bloom, the stocks and wallflowers under the window, the huge barns full of corn, the stacks of all shapes and sizes in the rick-yard, cows and sheep and pigs and poultry told a pleasant tale of rural comfort and rural affluence.

The bride was taken to survey her new dominions by her proud bridegroom, and the blacksmith finding me, I suppose, easier to carry than to lead, followed close upon their steps with me in his arms.

Nothing could exceed the good nature of my country beau ; he pointed out bantams and pea-fowls, and took me to see a tame lamb and a tall, staggering calf, born that morning ; but for all that, I do not think I should have submitted so quietly to the indignity of being carried, I, who had ridden thither on Brown Bess, and was at that instant filling the ostensible place of bridesmaid, if it had not been for the chastening influence of a little touch of fear. Entering the poultry-yard I had caught sight of a certain turkey-cock, who erected that circular tail of his, and swelled out his deep-red comb and gills after a fashion familiar to that truculent bird, but which up to the present hour I am far from admiring. A turkey at Christmas well roasted with bread sauce, may have his merits ; but if I meet him alive in his

feathers, especially when he swells them out and sticks up his tail, I commonly get out of his way even now, much more sixty years ago. So I let the blacksmith carry me.

Then we went to the dairy, so fresh and cool and clean—glittering with cleanliness! overflowing with creamy riches! and there I had the greatest enjoyment of my whole day, the printing with my own hands a pat of butter, and putting it up in a little basket covered with a vine leaf, to take home for the dear mamma's tea. Then we should have gone to the kitchen, the back kitchen, the brewhouse, the wash-house, and the rest of the bride's new territories, but this part of the domicile was literally too hot to hold us; the cooking of the great wedding dinner was in full activity, and the bridegroom himself was forced to retreat before his notable mother, who had come to superintend all things for the day.

So back we drew to the hall, a large square bricked apartment, with a beam across the ceiling, a wide yawning chimney, and wooden settles with backs to them; where many young people being assembled, and one of them producing a fiddle, it was agreed to have a country-dance until dinner should be ready, the bride and bridegroom leading off, and I following with the bridegroom's man.

Oh, the blunders, the confusion, the merriment of that country-dance! No two people attempted the same figure; few aimed at any figure at all; each went his own way; many stumbled; some fell, and everybody capered, laughed, and shouted at once. My partner prudently caught me up in his arms again, for fear of my being knocked down and danced

over, which, considering some of the exploits of some of the performers, seemed by no means impossible, and would have been a worse catastrophe than an onslaught of the turkey-cock.

A summons to dinner put an end to the glee. Such a dinner! The plenty of Camacho's wedding was but a type of my Nancy's. Fish from the great pond, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, boiled fowls and a gammon of bacon, a green goose and a sucking pig, plum puddings, apple pies, cheese-cakes and custards, formed a part of the bill of fare, followed by home-brewed beer and home-made wine, by syllabub, and by wedding cake. Everybody ate enough for four, and there was four times more than could by any possibility be eaten. I have always thought it one of the strongest proofs of sense and kindness in my pretty maid, that she rescued me from the terrible hospitality of her mother-in-law, and gave me back unscathed into my father's hands, when about three o'clock he arrived to reclaim me.

The affluence and abundance of that gala day—the great gala of a life-time—in that Hampshire farmhouse, I have never seen surpassed.

This was my first appearance as a bridesmaid. My next, which took place about a twelvemonth after, was of a very different description.

A first cousin of my father, the daughter of his uncle and guardian, had by the death of her mother's brother, become a wealthy heiress; and leaving her picturesque old mansion in Northumberland, Little Harle Tower, a true border keep overhanging the Warsbeck, for a journey to what the Northumbrians of that day emphatically called "the South," came

after a season in London to pass some months with us. At our house she became acquainted with the brother of a Scotch Duke, an Oxford student, who, passing the long vacation with his mother, had nothing better to do than to fall in love. Each had what the other wanted—the lady money, the gentleman rank; and as his family were charmed with the match, and hers had neither the power nor the wish to oppose it, everything was arranged with as little delay as lawyers, jewellers, coachmakers, and mantua-makers, would permit.

How the first step in the business, the inevitable and awful ceremonial of a declaration of love and a proposal of marriage was ever brought about, has always been to me one of the most unsolvable of mysteries—an enigma without the word.

Lord Charles, as fine a young man as one should see in a summer's day, tall, well made, with handsome features, fair capacity, excellent education, and charming temper, had an infirmity which went nigh to render all these good gifts of no avail: a shyness, a bashfulness, a timidity most painful to himself, and distressing to all about him. It is not uncommon to hear a quiet, silent man of rank, unjustly suspected of pride and haughtiness; but there could be no such mistake here—his shamefacedness was patent to all men. I myself, a child not five years old, one day threw him into an agony of blushing, by running up to his chair in mistake for my papa. Now I was a shy child, a very shy child, and as soon as I arrived in front of his Lordship, and found that I had been misled by a resemblance of dress, by the blue coat and buff waistcoat, I first of all crept under the table,

and then flew to hide my face in my mother's lap ; my poor fellow-sufferer, too big for one place of refuge, too old for the other, had nothing for it but to run away, which, the door being luckily open, he happily accomplished.

That a man with such a temperament, who could hardly summon courage to say "How d'ye do?" should ever have wrought himself up to the point of putting the great question, was wonderful enough ; that he should have submitted himself to undergo the ordeal of what was called in those days a public wedding, was more wonderful still.

Perhaps the very different temper of the lady may offer some solution to the last of these riddles ; perhaps (I say it in all honour, for there is no shame in offering some encouragement to a bashful suitor) it may assist us in expounding them both.

Of a certainty, my fair cousin was pre-eminently gifted with those very qualities in which her lover was deficient. Everything about her was prompt and bright, cheerful and self-possessed. Nearly as tall as himself, and quite as handsome, it was of the beauty that is called showy—a showy face, a showy figure, a showy complexion. We felt at a glance that those radiant, well-opened hazel eyes, had never quailed before mortal glance, and that that clear round cheek, red and white like a daisy, had never been guilty of a blush in its whole life. Handsome as she was, it was a figure that looked best in a riding-habit, and a face that of all head-dresses best became a beaver hat ; just a face and figure for a procession ; she would not have minded a coronation : on the contrary, she would have been enchanted to

have been a queen-regnant ; but as a coronation was out of the question, she had no objection, taking the publicity as a part of the happiness, to a wedding as grand as the resources of a country town could make it.

So a wedding procession was organised, after the fashion of Sir Charles Grandison, comprising the chief members of each family, especially of the ducal one ; an infinite number of brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, cousins and clansfolk, friends and acquaintances, all arranged in different carriages, according to their rank ; ladies, gentlemen, servants, and horses, decorated with white and silver favours, in so long a line, that it extended from Coley Avenue to St. Mary's Church. The first carriage, a low phaeton, drawn by ponies led by grooms, containing three children, two of five and six years old, niece and nephew of the bridegroom, who, with myself (already a lady of experience in that line), were to officiate as bride-maidens and bridegroom's man ; the last, also an open carriage, with only the bride and my dear papa, who gave her away.

How well I recollect the crowd of the street, the crowd of the churchyard, the crowd of the church ! There was no crying at this wedding though ; no crying, and far fewer smiles.

The young couple proceeded to Bath and Clifton from the church door ; and the rest of the procession returned to our house to eat bridecake, drink to the health of the new-married pair, and be merry at their leisure ; after which many dispersed, but the members of the two families and the more intimate friends remained to dinner ; and in the confusion of pre-

paring to entertain so large a party, the servants, even those belonging to the nursery, were engaged in different ways, and we children left to our own devices, and finding nearly the whole house free to our incursions, betook ourselves to a game at hide and seek.

Now in honour of the day, and of the grand part we had filled in the grand ceremony of the morning, we small people had been arrayed in white from top to toe, Master Martin in a new suit of jean, richly braided, his sister and myself in clear muslin frocks, edged with lace, and long Persian sashes, the whole width of the silk, fringed with silver, whilst all parties, little boys and little girls, had white beaver hats and heavy ostrich plumes. We young ladies had, as a matter of course, that instinctive respect for our own finery which seems an innate principle in womankind; moreover, we were very good children, quiet, orderly and obedient. Master Martin, on the other hand, our elder by a year, had some way or other, imbibed the contempt at once for fine clothes and for the authorities of the nursery, which is not uncommon amongst his rebellious sex; so the first time it fell to his lot to hide, he ensconced himself in the very innermost recesses of the coalhole, from which delightful retirement he was dragged, after a long search, by his own maid, who had at last awakened from the joys of gossiping and making believe to help in the housekeeper's room, to the recollection that Lady Mary might possibly inquire after her children. The state of his apparel and of her temper may be more easily imagined than described. He, Duke's grandson though he were,



looked like nothing better or worse than a chimney-sweeper. She stormed like a fury. But as all the storming in the world, would not restore the young gentleman or his bridal suit to their pristine state of cleanliness, she took wit in her anger and put him to bed, as a measure partly of punishment, partly of concealment ;—the result of which was that he, the culprit, thoroughly tired with excitement and exercise, with play and display, and well stuffed with dainties to keep him quiet, was consigned to his comfortable bed, whilst we pattern little girls had to undergo the penalty of making our appearance and our curtsies in the drawing-room, amongst all the fine folks of *our* Camacho's wedding, and to stay there, weariest of the many weary, two or three hours beyond our accustomed time. With so little justice are the rewards and punishments of this world distributed—even in the nursery !

Not long after this I made my first visit to London, under the auspices and in company of the dear papa. Business called him thither in the middle of July, and he suddenly announced his intention of driving me up in his gig—such was the then word for a high, open carriage holding two persons !—unencumbered by any other companion, male or female. George only, the old groom, was sent forward with a spare horse over-night to Maidenhead Bridge (ah ! that charming inn is un-inned now-a-days by the railways !), and the dear papa, conforming to my nursery hours, we dined at Cranford Bridge (I dare say that that hotel, with its pretty garden and its Portugal laurels, has disappeared also), and reached Hatchett's Hotel, Picca-

dilly (the New White Horse Cellar of the old stage-coaches), early in the afternoon. There a steady civil barmaid undertook the care of me during our stay; but, as he had foreseen, I was too much awake and alive with novelty and amusement, too strong in my happiness, to want anybody to take care of me except the dear papa himself.

I had enjoyed the drive past all expression, chattering all the way, and falling into no other mistakes than those common to larger people than myself, of thinking that London began at Brentford, and wondering in Piccadilly when the crowd would go by; and I was so little tired when we arrived, that, to lose no time, we betook ourselves that night to the Haymarket Theatre, the only one then open. I had been at plays in the country, in a barn in Hampshire, and at a regular theatre at our new home, and I loved them dearly with that confiding and uncritical pleasure which is the wisest and the best. But the country play was nothing to the London play—a lively comedy, with the rich cast of those days—one of the comedies that George III. enjoyed so heartily. I enjoyed it as much as he, and laughed and clapt my hands, and danced on my father's knee, and almost screamed with delight, so that a party in the same box, who had begun by being half-angry at my restlessness, finished by being amused with my amusement.

The next day, my father having an appointment at the Bank, took the opportunity of showing me St. Paul's and the Tower.

At St. Paul's, I saw all the wonders of the place: whispered in the whispering-gallery, and walked up

the tottering wooden stairs, not into the ball itself, but to the circular balustrade of the highest gallery beneath it. I have never been there since, but I can still recall most vividly that wonderful panorama, the strange diminution produced by the distance, the toylike carriages and horses, and men and women moving noiselessly through the toylike streets; and (although not frightened then) still more vividly do I recall the dangerous state of the decaying stairs, the swaying rope to hold by, the light showing through the crevices of the wood. My father held me carefully by the hand; and I have no recollection of having felt the slightest fear; nevertheless the impression of danger must have been very great, since for many years of my life falling through *those* stairs was my bad dream, the dream that gives such sure warning of physical ill, when fever is impending, or any derangement occurs in the system. Then we proceeded to the Tower, that place so striking by force of contrast; its bright lights and strong shadows; the jewels, the armour, the armoury, glittering in stern magnificence amidst the gloom of the old fortress, and the stories of great personages imprisoned, beheaded, buried within its walls;—a dreary thing it seemed to be a Queen! But at night I went to Astley's and I forgot the sorrows of Lady Jane Grey and Anne Boleyn in the wonders of the horsemanship, and the tricks of the clown. After all, Astley's, although very well in its way, was not the play, and we agreed that the next night, the last we were to spend in London, we would go again to the Haymarket.

Into that last day we crowded all the sightseeing possible, the Houses of Lords and Commons, where I sat upon the woolsack and in the Speaker's chair, about the smallest person, I suppose, that ever filled those eminent seats. Then Westminster Abbey, where, besides the glorious old building and the tombs, figured at that time certain figures in waxwork, Queen Anne and Queen Elizabeth as ugly as life, and General Monk holding out his cap for money. I remember my father giving me a shilling to drop in as our share of the contribution, and my wondering what became of it (are those figures in existence now? and does the General still hold forth the eleemosynary cap?) Thence we proceeded to Cox's Museum in Spring Gardens, and saw and heard a little bird, who seemed made of diamonds and rubies, who clapt its wings and sang. There too (it was a place full of strange deceptions) I sate down upon a chair, and the cushion forthwith began to squeak like a cat and kittens, so like a cat and kittens that I more than half expected to be scratched. And then to the Leverian Museum in the Blackfriars Road, a delightful abode of birds and butterflies, where I saw dead and stuffed with a reality that wanted nothing but life, nearly all the beautiful creatures that little girls see now alive at the Zoological. The promised visit to the Haymarket Theatre formed a fit conclusion to this day of enchantment. We saw another capital comedy (I think Colman's "Heir at Law") capitally acted, and laughed until we could laugh no longer. And then the next day we drove home without a moment's weariness of mind or body.

Such was my first journey to London.

Upon looking back to that journey of nearly sixty years ago, what strikes me most is the small dimensions to which the capital of England was then confined, compared with those which it now covers. When I stood on the topmost gallery of St. Paul's, I saw a compact city, spreading along the river, it is true, from Billingsgate to Westminster, but clearly defined to the north and to the south, the West End beginning at Hyde Park Corner, and bordered by Hyde Park on the one side and the Green Park on the other. Then, in spite of my mistaking the stones of Brentford for the stones of London, Belgravia was a series of pastures, and Paddington a village. Now squares and terraces are closing round the terminus of the Great Western, and the stateliest mansions of the metropolis cover the green fields which separated Sloane Street from Pimlico. People wonder at the size of the Great Exhibition, but the town of which it forms a part, that great throbbing heart of a great nation, seems to me more wonderful far. To describe London as it is, or even in a few pages to enumerate the sights which we should show to a child now would be as impossible a task as to crowd into the same space the marvels contained in Mr. Paxton's wonderful house of glass.

Far more impossible! for a very few lines would comprise the chief impression produced upon me when escorted by my excellent friend Mr. Lucas, and guided by the fine taste of that most tasteful of painters, I walked through the Great Exhibition this summer. Next perhaps to the building itself, with the statues and hangings to which it owes its distinctive character, and the fountains and people who give to it movement and life;—next to the vastness, the lightness, the ex-

quisite fitness of the building ; and excepting perhaps only that triumph of modern sculpture—Kiss's bold, expressive, impassioned group—that which most filled the eye and the mind seemed to me to be the Indian tissues, however called, with their delicious harmony of colour, and their strange power of interweaving the precious metals with their silken textures. There is one shawl where upon a white ground the same pattern is repeated now in gold and now in silver, which seems to me actually to emit light. Those Indian draperies are poems which have no need of words, poems invented thousands of years ago, and repeated from dynasty to dynasty, from empire to empire. So are those Tunisian vases, forms of ineffable grace, such as may have been carried to the fountain or the well by the captive queens of Grecian fable or the Hebrew maidens of sacred history. Is it that those ancient nations of the East and of the South have in them the great principle of permanence which is a sort of earthly immortality? that having once seized the Beautiful, they are content to abide by it, and to produce and reproduce the same grace of form and harmony of colour, just as Nature herself is content to produce and reproduce her marvels of vegetable life, her lotus on the river, her magnolia in the wood? If so, let us strive to copy them, not in such a combination of hues, or such lines of contour, but in the greater wisdom of loving and admiring beauty because it is beautiful, and not because according to the caprice of the hour it happens to be new or to be old.

It is now full time to come to Dr. Johnson.

The London which I saw sixty years ago was not materially different from that in which he had lived

and reigned—the king of conversation and almost of literature. One proof of this supremacy was afforded at that very time when my father, by no means a bookish man, and a most ardent Whig, stopped the coach two or three times during our drive to the Bank, to show me Bolt-court, and various other courts distinguished by the residence of the great lexicographer. Boswell's inimitable life had of course its share in this interest; but independently of that remarkable book the feeling was deep and was general; and when we consider that the society of which he was the acknowledged head comprised such names as Burke and Fox and Reynolds and Goldsmith, we cannot doubt but in spite of his virulent prejudices, his absurd superstition, and his latinized English, Samuel Johnson was not only a good man but a great man.

One who was pre-eminently both, Dr. Channing, Republican by nation and opinion, Unitarian by creed, has a passage relating to Johnson, which, while alleging nearly all that can be said against him, always struck me as admirable for justice and for candour—the candour of an adversary and an opponent. It occurs in a "Review of the Writings and Character of Milton," in which the American author had, as matter of course, controverted the decisions of the English critic. He says—I omit much that relates only to Milton—he says:

"We wish not to disparage Johnson. We could find no pleasure in sacrificing one great man to the *manes* of another. He did not and he could not appreciate Milton. We doubt whether two other minds, having so little in common as those of which we are now speaking, can be found in the higher

walks of literature. Johnson was great in his own sphere, but that sphere was comparatively of the earth, whilst Milton's was only inferior to that of angels. It was customary in the day of Johnson's glory to call him a giant, to class him with a mighty but still an earth-born race. Milton we should rank among seraphs. Johnson's mind acted chiefly on man's actual condition, on the realities of life, on the springs of human action, on the passions which now agitate society, and he seems hardly to have dreamed of a higher state of the human mind than was then exhibited. \* \* \* In religion, Johnson was gloomy and inclined to superstition, and on the subject of government leaned to absolute power, and the idea of reforming either never entered his mind but to disturb and provoke it. How could Johnson be just to Milton? The comparison which we have instituted has compelled us to notice Johnson's defects; but we trust we are not blind to his merits. His stately march of style, his pomp and power of language, his strength of thought, his reverence for virtue and religion, his vigorous logic, his practical wisdom, his insight into the springs of human action, and the solemn pathos which occasionally pervades his descriptions of life and his references to his own history command our willing admiration. That he wanted enthusiasm and creative imagination and lofty sentiment was not his fault. We do not blame him for not being Milton. We would even treat what we deem the faults of Johnson with a tenderness approaching respect; for they were results to a degree which man cannot estimate of a diseased, irritable, nervous, unhappy, physical temperament, and belonged to the



body more than to the mind." So far the great American. Would that all critics had his charity!

In none of Dr. Channing's praises of Johnson do I join more cordially than in the admiration with which he speaks of his occasional references to his own history. I subjoin the letter to Lord Chesterfield which comprises so many of the distinguishing characteristics of his style, together with a pungency, a truth, and a pathos, which belong even more to personal character than to literary power. It explains itself:

"My Lord,

"I have lately been informed by the proprietor of 'The World,' that two papers in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

"When upon some slight encouragement I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*, that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

"Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I

waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door ; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

“The Shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

“Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early had been kind ; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it ; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it ; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

“Having carried on my work, therefore, with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less ; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

“My Lord,

“Your Lordship’s most humble,

“Most obedient servant,

“SAMUEL JOHNSON.”

My concluding extract is of a very different description—as different as the character and situation of the two persons to whom the letter and the stanzas relate. These verses again tell their own story, though they do not tell the whole, for Johnson, poor himself, was to the poor apothecary a generous patron and an unfailing friend. The poem has much of the homely pathos, the graphic truth of Crabbe, and is so free from manner, that it might rather pass for his than for Dr. Johnson's.

## ON THE DEATH-BED OF ROBERT LEVETT.

Condemned to Hope's delusive mine,  
As on we toil from day to day,  
By sudden blast or slow decline  
Our social comforts drop away.

Well tried through many a varying year,  
See Levett to the grave descend  
Officious, innocent, sincere,  
Of every friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills Affection's eye  
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind,  
Nor lettered arrogance deny  
Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting nature called for aid,  
And hovering Death prepared the blow,  
His vigorous remedy displayed  
The power of Art without the show.

In misery's darkest caverns known,  
His ready help was ever nigh,  
Where helpless anguish poured his groan,  
And lonely want retired to die.

No summons mocked by chill delay,  
No petty gains disdained by pride ;  
The modest wants of every day,  
The toil of every day supplied.

His virtues walked their narrow round,  
Nor made a pause nor left a void ;  
And sure the Eternal Master found,  
His single talent well employed.

The busy day, the peaceful night,  
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by ;  
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,  
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no throbs of fiery pain,  
No cold gradations of decay ;  
Death broke at once the vital chain,  
And freed his soul the nearest way.

## XII.

## OLD POETS.

ROBERT HERRICK—GEORGE WITHERS.

NOTHING seems stranger in the critics of the last century than their ignorance of the charming lyrical poetry of the times of the early Stuarts and the Commonwealth. One should think that the songs of the great dramatists, whose genius they did acknowledge—Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ben Jonson—might have prepared them to recognise the kindred melodies of such versifiers as Marlowe and Raleigh and Wither and Marvell. His Jacobite prejudices might have predisposed Dr. Johnson in particular to find some harmonious stanzas in the minstrels of the cavaliers, Lovelace and the Marquis of Montrose. But so complete is the silence in which the writers of that day pass over these glorious songsters, that it seems only charitable to suppose that these arbiters of taste had never met with their works. With the honourable exceptions of Thomas Warton and Bishop Percy, there is not a critic from Johnson downward, who does not cite Waller as the first poet who smoothed our rugged tongue into harmonious verse. And the prejudice lingers still in places where one does not expect to find it. The parish clerk of Beaconsfield is by no means the only, although by far the most excusable authority who, standing bare-headed

before his pyramidal tomb in the churchyard, assured me with the most honest conviction that Waller was the earliest and finest versifier in the language.

Herrick is one of the many whose lyrics might be called into court to overturn this verdict. Originally bred to the bar, he took orders at a comparatively late period, and obtained a living in Devonshire, from which he fled during the strict rule of the Lord Protector, concealing himself under a lay habit in London, and returning to his parsonage with the return of the monarch, whose birth had formed the subject of one of his earliest pastorals.

More than any eminent writer of that day Herrick's collection requires careful sifting : but there is so much fancy, so much delicacy, so much grace, that a good selection would well repay the publisher. Bits there are that are exquisite : as when in enumerating the cates composing "Oberon's Feast" in his "Fairyland," he includes, amongst a strange farrago of unimaginable dishes,

"The broke heart of a nightingale  
O'ercome in music."

Some of his pieces, too, contain curious illustrations of the customs, manners, and prejudices of our ancestors. I shall quote one or two from the division of the Hesperides that he calls "charms and ceremonies," beginning with the motto :

DIVINATION BY A DAFFODIL.

When a daffodil I see,  
Hanging down his head toward me,  
Guess I may what I may be :  
First, I shall decline my head ;  
Secondly, I shall be dead ;  
Lastly, safely buried.

The adorning the houses with evergreens seems then to have been as common as our own habit of decking them with flowers :

## CEREMONIES FOR CANDLEMAS EVE.

Down with rosemary and bays,  
Down with the mistletoe,  
Instead of holly now upraise  
The greener box for show.

The holly hitherto did sway ;  
Let box now domiheer,  
Until the dancing Easter day  
Or Easter's Eve appear.

Then youthful box, which now has grace  
Your houses to renew,  
Grown old, surrender must his place  
Unto the crisped yew.

When yew is out, then birch comes in  
And many flowers beside,  
Both of a fresh and fragrant kin  
To honour Whitsuntide.

Green rushes then and sweetest bents,  
With cooler oaken boughs,  
Come in for comely ornaments  
To re-adorn the house.

Thus times do shift ; each thing his turn does hold,  
New things succeed as former things grow old,

## THE BELLMAN.

From noise of scare-fires rest ye free,  
From murders Benedicite ;  
From all mischances that may fright  
Your pleasing slumbers in the night,  
Mercy secure ye all, and keep  
The goblin from ye while ye sleep.  
Past one o'clock, and almost two,  
My masters all, good day to you !

The description of a steer in one of his "Bucolics" is graphic and life-like. The herdsman is lamenting the loss of her favourite :

I have lost my lovely steer,  
That to me was far more dear  
Than these kine that I milk here ;  
Broad of forehead, large of eye,  
Party-coloured like a pie,  
Smooth in each limb as a die ;  
Clear of hoof, and clear of horn,  
Sharply pointed as a thorn ;  
With a neck by yoke unworn,  
From the which hung down, by strings,  
Balls of cowslip, daisy rings  
Interlaced by ribbonings.  
Fattless every way for shape,  
Not a straw could him escape ;  
Ever gamesome as an ape,  
But yet harmless as a sheep.  
Pardon, Lacon, if I weep.

But his real delight was amongst flowers and bees, and nymphs and cupids ; and certainly these graceful subjects were never handled more gracefully :

#### THE CAPTIVE BEE.

As Julia once a slumbering lay,  
It chanced a bee did fly that way,  
After a dew or dew-like shower,  
To tinkle freely in a flower.  
For some rich flower he took the lip  
Of Julia and began to sip ;  
But when he felt he sucked from thence  
Honey, and in the quintessence,  
He drank so much he scarce could stir,  
So Julia took the pilferer.  
And thus surprised, as filchers use,  
He thus began himself to excuse :



"Sweet lady-flower ! I never brought  
Hither the least one thieving thought ;  
But, taking those rose-lips of yours  
For some fresh fragrant luscious flowers,  
I thought I there might take a taste  
Where so much syrup ran at waste.  
Besides, know this, I never sting  
The flower that gives me nourishing ;  
But with a kiss of thanks do pay  
For honey that I bear away."  
This said, he laid his little scrip  
Of honey 'fore her ladyship ;  
And told her, as some tears did fall,  
That that he took, and that was all.  
At which she smiled, and bade him go  
And take his bag ; but thus much know,  
When next he came a pilfering so,  
He should from her full lips derive  
Honey enough to fill his hive.

## THE BAG OF THE BEE.

About the sweet bag of a bee  
Two Cupids fell at odds ;  
And whose the pretty prize should be,  
They vowed to ask the gods.  
Which, Venus hearing, thither came,  
And for their boldness stript them ;  
And taking thence from each his flame,  
With rods of myrtle whipt them.  
Which done, to still their wanton cries  
When quiet grown she'd seen them,  
She kissed and wiped their dove-like eyes,  
And gave the bag between them.

## TO THE WILLOW TREE.

Thou art to all lost love the best,  
The only true plant found,  
Wherewith young men and maids, distress  
And left of love are crowned.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF

When once the lover's rose is dead  
 Or laid aside forlorn,  
 Then willow garlands 'bout the head,  
 Bedewed with tears are worn.

When with neglect the lover's bane  
 Poor maids rewarded be  
 For their love lost ; their only gain  
 Is but a wreath from thee.

And underneath thy cooling shade,  
 When weary of the light,  
 The love-spent youth and love-sick maid  
 Come to weep out the night.

\* \* \* \*

## THE FUNERAL RITES OF THE ROSE.

The rose was sick, and smiling died ;  
 And being to be sanctified,  
 About the bed there sighing stood  
 The sweet and flowery sisterhood.  
 Some hung the head, while some did bring,  
 To wash her, water from the spring ;  
 Some laid her forth while others wept,  
 But all a solemn fast there kept.  
 The holy sisters some among  
 The sacred dirge and trental sung ;  
 But ah ! what sweets smelt everywhere  
 As heaven had spent all perfumes there !  
 At last, when prayers for the dead  
 And rites were all accomplished,  
 They, weeping, spread a lawny loom,  
 And closed her up as in a tomb.

## SONG.

Gather ye rosebuds, while ye may,  
 Old Time is still a flying ;  
 And this same flower that smiles to-day,  
 To-morrow will be dying,

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,  
The higher he's a getting,  
The sooner will his race be run,  
The nearer he's to setting.

The age is best which is the first,  
When youth and blood are warmer ;  
But, being spent, the worse and worse  
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,  
And, whilst ye may, go marry ;  
For having lost but once your prime,  
You may for ever tarry.

## TO MEADOWS.

Ye have been fresh and green,  
Ye have been filled with flowers ;  
And ye the walks have been,  
Where maids have spent their hours.

Ye have beheld where they  
With wicker arks did come ;  
To kiss and bear away  
The richer cowslips home,

You've heard them sweetly sing,  
And seen them in a round ;  
Each virgin like the spring,  
With honeysuckles crowned.

But now we see none here,  
Whose silvery feet did tread ;  
And, with dishevelled hair,  
Adorned this smoother mead.

Like unthrifths, having spent  
Your stock, and needy grown,  
You're left here to lament  
Your poor estates alone.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF

## TO DAFFODILS.

Fair daffodils, we weep to see,  
 You haste away so soon ;  
 As yet the early rising sun  
 Has not attained its noon.  
 Stay, stay,  
 Until the hasting day  
 Has run,  
 But to the even-song,  
 And, having prayed together, we  
 Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,  
 We have as short a spring ;  
 As quick a growth to meet decay  
 As you or any thing.  
 We die,  
 As your hours do, and dry  
 Away,  
 Like to the summer's rain,  
 Or, as the pearls of morning dew,  
 Ne'er to be found again.

## THE NIGHT-PIECE.—TO JULIA.

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee,  
 The shooting stars attend thee ;  
 And the elves also,  
 Whose little eyes glow  
 Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.  
 No will-o'-th'-wisp mislight thee ;  
 Nor snake nor slow-worm bite thee ;  
 But on, on thy way,  
 Not making a stay,  
 Since ghost there is none to affright thee.  
 Let not the dark thee cumber,  
 What though the moon doth slumber ?  
 The stars of the night  
 Will lend thee their light  
 Like tapers clear without number.

## TO BLOSSOMS.

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,  
Why do ye fall so fast ?  
Your date is not so past  
But you may yet stay here awhile  
To blush and gently smile,  
And go at last.

What were ye born to be  
An hour or half's delight,  
And so to bid good-night ?  
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth,  
Merely to show your worth,  
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we  
May read how soon things have  
Their end, though ne'er so brave ;  
And after they have shown their pride,  
Like you, awhile they glide  
Into the grave.

The want in these graceful and delicate lyrics is thew and sinew. And yet they are what they pretend to be—airy petals of the cherry-blossom, hinting of fruit, bees fluttering and musical, giving token of honey.

The Muse fares ill in civil contentions. As Herrick fled before the Roundheads, so was George Wither oppressed by the Cavaliers. The following noble praise of poetry was written in a prison : in a prison the poor poet passed many of his latter years, and it is still a question whether he actually died in confinement, or perished of want and misery after his release.

But, alas ! my muse is slow ;  
For thy pace she flags too low.  
But though for her sake I am crost,  
Though my best hopes I have lost,  
And knew she would make my trouble,  
Ten times more than ten times double ;  
I would love and keep her too  
Spite of all the world could do.  
For though banished from my flocks,  
And confined within these rocks,  
Here I waste away the light,  
And consume the sullen night ;  
She doth for my comfort stay,  
And keeps many cares away.  
Though I miss the flowery fields,  
And those sweets the spring-tide yields ;  
Though I may not see those groves,  
Where the shepherds chaunt their loves,  
And the lasses more excel  
Than the sweet-voiced Philomel ;  
Though of all those pleasures past  
Nothing now remains at last,  
But remembrance, poor relief  
That more makes than mends my grief ;  
She's my mind's companion still  
Maugre Envy's evil will :  
Whence she should be driven too,  
Were't in mortal's power to do.  
She doth tell me where to borrow  
Comfort in the midst of sorrow ;  
Makes the desolatest place  
In her presence be a grace ;  
And the blackest discontents  
Be her fairest ornaments.  
In my former days of bliss  
Her divine skill taught me this,  
That from every thing I saw  
I could some invention draw ;

And raise Pleasure to her height  
Through the meanest object's sight :  
By the murmur of a spring,  
Or the least boughs rustling ;  
By a daisy, whose leaves spread  
Shut when Titan goes to bed ;  
On a shady bush or tree  
She could more infuse in me  
Than all Nature's beauties can  
In some other wiser man.  
By her help I also now  
Make this churlish place allow  
Some things, that may sweeten gladness  
In the very gall of sadness :  
The dull lonesome, the black shade  
That these hanging vaults have made,  
The strange music of the waves  
Beating on these hollow caves,  
This black den, which rocks emboss  
Overgrown with eldest moss ;  
The rude portals that give light  
More to terror than delight ;  
This my chamber of neglect  
Walled about with disrespect ;  
From all these, and this dull air  
A fit object for despair,  
She hath brought me by her might  
To draw comfort and delight.

Therefore, thou best earthly bliss,  
I will cherish thee for this !  
Poetry, thou sweet'st content  
That e'er Heaven to mortals lent ;  
Though they as a trifle leave thee  
Whose dull thoughts cannot conceive thee ;  
Though thou be to them a scorn  
That for nought but earth are born ;  
Let my life no longer be  
Than I am in love with thee !

Though our wise ones call it madness,  
Let me never taste of gladness  
If I love not thy maddest fits  
Above all their greatest wits !  
And though some, too seeming holy,  
Do account thy raptures folly,  
'Thou dost teach me to contemn  
What makes knaves and fools of them !

“The praises of poetry have been often sung in ancient and modern times ; strange powers have been ascribed to it of influence over animate and inanimate auditors ; its force over fascinated crowds has been acknowledged : but before Wither no one had celebrated its power *at home* ; the wealth and strength which this divine gift confers upon its possessor.” This fine criticism, worthy of the poetry which it celebrates, is by Charles Lamb.



## XIII.

## FEMALE POETS.

JOANNA BAILLIE\*—CATHERINE FANSHAWE.

BELOVED, admired, appreciated by the best spirits of her time, it is with no little triumph that I, who plead guilty to some of that *esprit de corps* which may be translated into "pride of sex," write the name of our great female dramatist—of the first woman who won high and undisputed honours in the highest class of English poetry. The pleasure of rendering her a faint and imperfect justice is all the greater that I have the honour of claiming acquaintance with this most gifted person, and that she is in her domestic relations the very pattern of what a literary lady should be—quiet, unpretending, generous, kind, admirable in her writings, excellent in her life.

And yet of Mrs. Joanna Baillie, the praised of Scott

---

\* Since writing this paper this gifted authoress and admirable woman has passed from this world to the higher and happier state which was ever in her thoughts. A letter from her to a mutual friend, written a very few days before her death, expresses her satisfaction in having received the sacrament with her sister the Sunday previous. In this letter, for the first time during a long correspondence, she breaks off somewhat suddenly, complaining of bodily fatigue, although no one then thought her ill.

and of all whose praise is best worth having for half a century, what can I say, but that many an age to come will echo back their applause !

Her tragedies have a boldness and grasp of mind, a firmness of hand, and resonance of cadence, that scarcely seem within the reach of a female writer ; whilst the tenderness and sweetness of her heroines—the grace of the love-scenes—and the trembling outgushings of sensibility, as in *Orra*, for instance, in the fine tragedy on Fear—would seem exclusively feminine, if we did not know that a true dramatist—as Shakespeare or Fletcher—has the wonderful power of throwing himself, mind and body, into the character that he portrays. That Mrs. Joanna is a true dramatist, as well as a great poet, I, for one, can never doubt, although it has been the fashion to say that her plays do not act.

It must be above fifty years ago that I, then a girl of thirteen, in company with my old and dear friend, Mr. Harness, the bosom friend of Thomas Hope, the friend and correspondent of Lord Byron (and, be it observed, of all his correspondents, the one who seems to have impressed the daring poet with the most sincere respect), then a boy considerably younger than myself, witnessed the representation of “*De Montfort*,” by John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. Forty years after, we had the pleasure of talking over that representation with the authoress, in Lady Dacre’s drawing-room, a place where poets “most do congregate,” and we both agreed that the impression which the performance had made upon us remained indelible. Now, the qualities in an acted play that fixed themselves upon the minds of children so young,

must have been purely dramatic. Purely dramatic, too, are many of the finer traits that strike us in reading, as, when *De Montfort*, with his ear quickened by hatred, announces the approach of *Rezenvelt*, and *Freberg* exclaims :

“How quick an ear thou hast for distant sound !  
I hear him not—”

and many others scattered through the tragedies.

I concede, however, very willingly, that Mrs. Joanna is a most charming lyrical poetess ; as witness the beautiful Morning Song in the “Beacon,” which breathes the very spirit of hope :

Up! quit thy bower ; late wears the hour ;  
Long have the rooks cawed round thy tower ;  
On flower and tree loud hums the bee ;  
The wilding kid sports merrily :  
A day so bright, so fresh, so clear,  
Showeth when good fortune’s near.

Up! lady fair, and braid thy hair,  
And bathe thee in the breezy air ;  
The rolling stream that soothed thy dream  
Is dancing in the sunny beam ;  
And hours so sweet, so bright, so gay,  
Will waft good fortune on its way.

Up! time will tell ; the friar’s bell  
Its service sound hath chimed well ;  
The aged crone keeps house alone,  
And reapers to the fields are gone ;  
The active day, so fair and bright,  
May bring good fortune ere the night.

There is a remarkable freedom in the diction and versification of the following beautiful song ; the more remarkable that it is written for a Welsh air :

## THE BLACK COCK.

Good morrow to thy sable beak,  
 And glossy plumage, dark and sleek,  
 Thy crimson moon and azure eye,  
 Cock of the heath so wildly shy!  
 I see thee slowly cowering, through  
 That wiry web of silver dew,  
 That twinkles in the morning air,  
 Like casement of my lady fair.

A maid there is in yonder tower,  
 Who, peeping from her early bower,  
 Half shows, like thee, with simple wile  
 Her braided hair and morning smile.  
 The rarest things, with wayward will,  
 Beneath the covert hide them still;  
 The rarest things to light of day  
 Look shortly forth and break away.

One fleeting moment of delight  
 I warmed me in her cheering sight,  
 And short, I ween, the time will be  
 That I shall parley hold with thee.  
 Through Snowdon's mist red beams the day;  
 The climbing herd-boy chaunts his lay:  
 The gnat-flies dance their sunny ring;  
 Thou art already on the wing.

This song is distinguished by the same delicious freedom, and was also written to music. Truly, the Muse can dance in fetters:

O welcome bat and owlet grey,  
 Thus winging low your airy way!  
 And welcome moth and drowsy fly,  
 That to mine ear come humming by!  
 And welcome shadows dim and deep,  
 And stars that through the pale sky peep;  
 O welcome all! to me ye say  
 My woodland love is on her way.

Upon the soft wind floats her hair,  
 Her breath is on the dewy air ;  
 Her steps are in the whispered sound  
 That steals along the stilly ground.  
 O dawn of day, in rosy bower,  
 What art thou to this witching hour ?  
 O noon of day, in sunshine bright,  
 What art thou to this fall of night ?

I cannot resist indulging myself by transcribing  
 the following Scottish ballad, a delightful specimen  
 of quaint archness and quiet humour :

FY, LET US A' TO THE WEDDING.

*(An Auld Song New Buskit.)*

Fy, let us a' to the wedding,  
 For they will be liting there ;  
 For Jock's to be married to Maggie,  
 The lass wi' the gowden hair.

And there will be jibing and jeering,  
 And glancing of bonny dark een,  
 Loud laughing, and smooth-gabbit speering  
 O' questions baith pawky and keen.

And there will be Bessy the beauty,  
 Wha raises her cockup sae hie,  
 And giggles at preachings and duty,—  
 Guid grant that she gang na' ajee !

And there will be auld Geordie Tanner,  
 Wha coft a young wife wi' his gowd ;  
 She'll flaunt wi' a silk gown upon her,  
 But, wow ! he looks dowie and cow'd.

And brown Tibbie Fowler the heiress,  
 Will perk at the tap o' the ha',  
 Encircled wi' suitors, wha's care is  
 To catch up her gloves when they fa',

Repeat a' her jokes as they're cleckit,  
And haver and glower in her face,  
While tocherless mays are negleckit,—  
A crying and scandalous case.

And Maysie, wha's claverin aunty  
Wad match her wi' Lowrie the laird,  
And learns the young fule to be vaunty,  
But neither to spin nor to caird.

And Andrew, wha's granny is yearning  
To see him a clerical blade,  
Was sent to the college for learning,  
And cam' back a coof as he gaed.

And there will be auld Widow Martin,  
That ca's hersel thirty and twa ;  
And thraw-gabbit Madge, wha, for certain,  
Was jilted by Hab o' the Shaw.

And Elspy the sewster sae genty,  
A pattern o' havins and sense,  
Will straik on her mittens sae genty,  
And crack wi' Mess John i' the spence.

And Angus, the seer of fairlies,  
That sits on the stane at his door,  
And tells about bogles, and mair lies  
Than tongue ever uttered before.

And there will be Bauldie the boaster,  
Sae ready wi' hands and wi' tongue  
Proud Paty and silly Sam Foster,  
Wha quarrel wi' auld and wi' young.

And Hugh the town-writer, I'm thinking,  
That trades in his lawyerly skill,  
Will egg on the fighting and drinking,  
To bring after-grist to his mill.

And Maggie—ha ! ha ! will be civil,  
And let the wee bridie a-be :  
A vilipend tongue is the devil,  
And ne'er was encouraged by me.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,  
For they will be liting there,  
Frae mony a far-distant ha'ding,  
The fun and the feasting to share.

For they will get sheep's-head and haggis,  
And browst o' the barley-mow ;  
Even he that comes latest and lag is  
May feast upon dainties enow.

Veal florentines in the o'en baked,  
Weel plenished wi' raisins and fat,  
Beef, mutton, and chuckies, a' taken  
Het reeking frae spit or frae pat.

And glasses (I trow 'tis na' said ill),  
To drink the young couple good luck,  
Weel fill'd wi' a braw beechen ladle,  
Frae punch-bowl as big as Dumbuck.

And then will come dancing and daffing,  
And reelin' and crossin' o' han's,  
Till even auld Luckie is laughing,  
As back by the aumry she stan's.

Sic bobbing, and flinging, and whirling,  
While fiddlers are making their din,  
And pipers are droning and skirling,  
As loud as the roar of the linn.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,  
For they will be liting there,  
For Jock's to be married to Maggie,  
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

CATHERINE FANSHAWE.

It has always seemed to me that one of the happiest positions—let me say the very happiest position, that a woman of great talent can occupy in our high civilization, is that of living a beloved and distin-

guished member of the best literary society ; enjoying, listening, admiring ; repaying all that she receives by a keen and willing sympathy ; cultivating to perfection the social faculty ; but abstaining from the wider field of authorship, even while she throws out here and there such choice and chosen bits as prove that nothing but disinclination to enter the arena debars her from winning the prize. How much better to belong to that portion of the audience which gives fame to the actor—that class of readers to whom the writer looks for reputation—than to figure as actor or as author oneself !

Besides the infinite wisdom of resting in such a position, seated midway on the hill of fame, enjoying all the beauties of the prospect, and shielded from the storms of the summit, and the perils of the steep and rocky way,—besides its security, its happiness, and its wisdom, such a choice has always appeared to me indicative of the very finest qualities, mental and moral ;—feminine, modest, generous, pure. I look up to a woman, who, with powers to command the most brilliant literary success, contents herself with a warm and unenvying sympathy in the success of others, with a mixture of reverence and admiration greater than I can accord to mere genius, however high. Rare are such women beyond all rareness : but that they do exist, my friend Miss Goldsmid is a living instance ; and that there was one such most eminent in the last generation, was felt by all who had the happiness and the privilege of knowing Catherine Fanshawe.

The name of this gifted woman is connected with the whole of that glorious society which formed the



pride and ornament of London during the early part of the present century—the society which, after a short interregum, succeeded the illustrious circle that had formed the great literary club in the days of Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, and Reynolds. Even with these names their successors may well bear a comparison. To mention them is enough : Scott, Southey, Rogers, Moore, Joanna Baillie, Maria Edgeworth, Madame d'Arblay, Wordsworth, Crabbe, Mrs. Siddons, Sotheby, Sharpe, W. R. Spencer, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Sir James Mackintosh, Lord Erskine, Lord Holland, William Harness, Sydney Smith, Campbell, Canning, Thomas Hope :—there is no telling where to stop. And amongst this society, at once so dazzling and so charming, there was no name more distinguished for brilliant and various talent, or for every attractive quality, than that of Catherine Fanshawe.

Cohere~~ss~~ with two other daughters of an ancient gentleman's family, the three lived together in that happy sisterly union peculiar to our country. Besides her remarkable talent for graceful and polished pleasantry, whether in prose or in verse, Miss Catherine Fanshawe was admirable as a letter-writer, as a reader of Shakespeare, and as a designer in almost every style. One of the few survivors of that brilliant society, himself a first-rate judge of art, says of her—“Her drawings and etchings are those of an artist; and so different are they in kind, that I have seen a large drawing called ‘The Genius of the Storm,’ which, if I were not afraid of my own prepossessions, I should say is sublime; whilst there are groups of children by her which no one has ever surpassed for

their beauty, simplicity, and truth ; and I have hanging up over my study fireplace a long aqua-tinted etching of hers, called 'An After-dinner Conversation,' which is as comical as anything by Bunbury, and a great deal better than anything of his, because while quite as humorous it is less caricatured."

Of course, the secret of this variety and of this excellence, lay in her power and her habit of observation. "She saw everything," says that excellent friend of hers and of mine to whom I owe the account of her drawings ; "she saw everything—the *whole of it*," and was only restrained from turning it into the most finished comedy by those feelings of a gentleman and a Christian (how nearly those words are synonymous !) which prevented her from running the risk of giving a moment's pain to any human being. I have a theory that the very highest talent commonly keeps very good company ; and no better illustration of its truth could be found than this admirable person, whose Christian graces were quite on a par with her mental endowments.

Far too few of her poems have been published. Those which I subjoin, have been taken from a volume now very scarce, consisting of miscellaneous pieces, by many authors, edited by Mrs. Joanna Baillie, for the benefit of a friend. The volume was published by subscription, and is remarkable not only for these charming pieces of pleasantry, and for some of the best poems of the editor, but as containing Sir Walter Scott's most successful dramatic effort, "Mac Duff's Cross," and Mr. Merivale's "Devon's Poly-Olbion," and also for having introduced to the world Southey's whimsical and characteristic experiment

upon rhyme and language, called "The Cataract of Lodore."

I plunge at once into one of the pleasantest of Miss Catherine Fanshawe's poems, "The Abrogation of the Birth-night Ball, by a Beau of the last Century." The description of the minuet is admirable.

For ever at his lordly call  
Uprose the spangled night ;  
Leading in gorgeous splendour bright  
The minuet and the ball.  
And balls each frolic hour may bring  
That revels through the maddening spring,  
Shaking with hurried step the painted floor,  
But minuets are no more !

No more the well-taught feet shall tread  
The figure of the mazy zed ;  
The beau of other times shall mourn  
As gone, and never to return,  
The graceful bow, the curtsy low,  
The floating forms that undulating glide,  
(Like anchor'd vessels on the swelling tide,)   
That rise and sink alternate as they go,  
Now bent the knee, now lifted on the toe ;  
The sidelong step that works its even way,  
The slow pas-grave and slower balancé ;  
Still with fix'd gaze he eyes the imagined fair,  
And turns the corner with an easy air.

Not so his partner. From her tangled train  
To free her captive foot she strives in vain ;  
Her tangled train the struggling captive holds  
(Like great Atrides) in its fatal folds ;  
The laws of gallantry his aid demand,  
The laws of etiquette withhold his hand.  
Such pains, such pleasures, now alike are o'er,  
And beaus and etiquette shall soon exist no more.

In their stead behold advancing  
Modern men and women dancing !

Step and dress alike express,  
 Above, below, from heel to toe,  
 Male and female awkwardness,  
 Without a hoop, without a ruffle,  
 One eternal jig and shuffle.  
 Where's the air, and where's the gait?  
 Where's the feather in the hat?  
 Where the frizz'd toupee? and where,  
 Oh! where's the powder for the hair?

\* \* \* \*

Mark the pair whom favouring fortune  
 At the envied top shall place;  
 Humbly they the next importune  
 To vouchsafe a little space;

Not the graceful arm to wave in,  
 Or the silken robe expand;  
 All superfluous action saving,  
 Idly drops the lifeless hand.

Her downcast eye the modest beauty  
 Sends as doubtful of their skill,  
 To see if feet perform their duty,  
 And their endless task fulfil.

Footing, footing, footing, footing,  
 Footing, footing, footing still.  
 While the rest, in hedgerow state,  
 All insensible to sound,  
 With more than human patience wait,  
 Like trees fast-rooted in the ground.

Not such as once, with sprightly motion,  
 To distant music stirr'd their stumps,  
 And tript from Pelion to the ocean,  
 Performing avenues and clumps:

What time old Jason's ship, the Argo,  
 Orpheus fiddling at the helm,  
 From Colchis bore her golden cargo,  
 Dancing o'er the azure realm.

But why recur to ancient story,  
 Or balls of modern date?  
 Be mine to trace the minuet's fate,  
 And mourn its fallen glory.

To ask who rang the passing bell?  
 If Vestris ran the solemn dirge to hear?  
 Genius of Valoüy, didst thou hover near?  
 Shade of Lepicq! and spirit of Gondel!

Now their angry forms arise,  
 Where wreaths of smoke involve the skies,  
 Above St. James's steeple.  
 I heard them curse our heavy heel,  
 The Irish step, the Highland reel,  
 And all the United People.

To the dense air the curse adhesive clung,  
 Repeated since by many a modish tongue  
 In words that may be said, but never shall be sung.\*

What cause untimely urged the minuet's fate?  
 Did war subvert the manners of the state?  
 Did savage nations give the barbarous law,  
 The Gaul Cisalpine or the Gonoquaw?  
 Its fall was destined to a peaceful land,  
 A sportive pencil and a courtly hand.  
 They left a name that time itself might spare  
 To grinding organs, and the dancing bear.

\* \* \* \*

My next extract is a restoration. I have it myself, printed in two editions of Lord Byron's works; the one English, the other American. The friend already quoted says of it,—“The letter H (I mean the Enigma so called, ascribed to Lord Byron,) she wrote at the Deepdene. I well remember her bringing it down at breakfast and reading it to us, and my impression is, that she had then just composed it.”

\* “Go to the devil and shake yourself.” The tune of a favourite country-dance.

## A RIDDLE.

'Twas in heaven pronounced, and 'twas mutter'd in hell,  
 And echo caught faintly the sound as it fell ;  
 On the confines of earth 'twas permitted to rest,  
 And the depths of the ocean its presence confess'd ;  
 'Twill be found in the sphere when 'tis riven asunder,  
 Be seen in the lightning and heard in the thunder.  
 'Twas allotted to man with his earliest breath,  
 Attends him at birth, and awaits him in death,  
 Presides o'er his happiness, honour, and health,  
 Is the prop of his house, and the end of his wealth.  
 In the heaps of the miser 'tis boarded with care,  
 But is sure to be lost on his prodigal heir.  
 It begins every hope, every wish it must bound,  
 With the husbandman toils, and with monarchs is crown'd.  
 Without it the soldier, the seaman may roam,  
 But woe to the wretch who expels it from home !  
 In the whispers of conscience its voice will be found,  
 Nor e'en in the whirlwind of passion be drown'd.  
 'Twill not soften the heart ; but though deaf be the ear,  
 It will make it acutely and instantly hear.  
 Yet in shade let it rest, like a delicate flower,  
 Ah ! breathe on it softly—it dies in an hour.

Now for another riddle—a charade—which my  
 fair friends shall have the pleasure of discovering for  
 themselves.

Inscribed on many a learned page,  
 In mystic characters and sage,  
     Long time my *First* has stood ;  
 And though its golden age be past,  
 In wooden walls it yet may last  
     Till clothed in flesh and blood.  
 My *Second* is a glorious prize  
 For all who love their wandering eyes  
     With curious sights to pamper ;  
 But 'tis a sight—which should they meet,  
 All' improvise in the street,  
     Ye gods ! how they would scamper !

My *tout's* a sort of wandering throne,  
 To woman limited alone,  
     The *salique* law reversing;  
 But while the imaginary queen  
 Prepares to act this novel scene,  
     Her royal part rehearsing,  
 O'erturning her presumptuous plan,  
 Up climbs the old usurper—man,  
 And she jogs after as she can.

It is not often that so trifling a subject has been rendered so graceful and so pleasant as in the following pleadings of two initials, *C versus K*.

## EPISTLE TO EARL HARCOURT.,

*On his wishing her to spell her name of Catherine with a K.*

And can his antiquarian eyes  
 My Anglo-Saxon C despise?  
 And does Lord Harcourt, day by day,  
 Regret the extinct initial K?  
 And still, with ardour unabated,  
 Labour to get it reinstated?  
 I know, my lord, your generous passion  
 For every long-exploded fashion;  
 And own the Katherine you delight in  
 Looks irresistibly inviting,  
 Appears to bear the stamp and mark  
 Of English used in Noah's Ark;  
 "But all that glitters is not gold,"  
 Nor all things obsolete are old.  
 Would you but take the pains to look  
 In Doctor Johnson's quarto book,  
 (As I did, wishing much to see  
 The aforesaid letter's pedigree),  
 Believe me 'twould a tale unfold  
 Would make your Norman blood run cold.  
 My lord, you'll find the K's no better  
 Than an interpolated letter—  
 A wandering Greek, a franchised alien,  
 Derived from Cadmus or Deucalion,

And, why, or wherefore none can tell,  
 Inserted 'twixt the I and L.  
 The learned say our English tongue  
 On Gothic beams is built and hung :  
 Then why the solid fabric piece  
 With motley ornaments from Greece ?  
 Her lettered despots had no bowels  
 For Northern consonants and vowels ;  
 The Norman and the Greek grammarian  
 Deemed us and all our words barbarian,  
 Till those hard words, and harder blows  
 Had silenced all our haughty foes,  
 And proud they were to kiss the sandals  
 (Shoes we had none) of Goths and Vandals.

\* \* \* \*

But since our Saxon line we trace  
 Up to this all-subduing race,  
 Who from their "sole dominion" hurled  
 The giants of the ancient world,  
 Their boasted languages confounding,  
 And with such mortal gutturals wounding,  
 That Greek or Latin fell or fled,  
 And soon were numbered with the dead ;—  
 Befits it us, so much their betters,  
 To spell our names with conquered letters ?  
 And shall they rise and prate again,  
 Like Falstaff from among the slain ?  
 A licence quite of modern date  
 Which no long customs consecrate ;  
 For since this K, of doleful sound,  
 First set his foot on British ground,  
 'Tis not, as antiquaries know,  
 A dozen centuries ago.

That darling theme of English story,  
 For learning famed and martial glory,  
 Alfred, who quelled the usurping Dane,  
 And burst indignant from his chain ;  
 Who slaves redeemed to reign o'er men,  
 Changing the falchion for the pen,



Alfred, whom yet these realms obèy,  
 In all his kingdom owned no K,  
 From foreign arms and letters free,  
 Preserved his Cyngly dignity,  
 And wrote it with a Saxon C.

\* \* \* \*

But 'grant this specious plea prevailing,  
 And all my legal learning failing,  
 There yet remains so black a charge,  
 Not only 'gainst the Ks at large,  
 But the individual K in question,  
 You'd tremble at the bare suggestion,  
 Nor ever more a wish reveal  
 So adverse to the public weal.

Dear gentle Earl, you little know  
 That wish might work a world of woe ;  
 The ears that are unborn would rise  
 In judgment 'gainst your lordship's eyes ;  
 The ears that are unborn would rue  
 Your letter patent to renew  
 The dormant dignity of *shrew*.  
 The K restored takes off the attainder,  
 And grants the title, with remainder  
 In perpetuity devised  
 To Katherines lawfully baptised.  
 What has not Shakespeare said and sung  
 Of our pre-eminence of tongue !  
 His glowing pen has writ the name  
 In characters of fire and flame ;  
 Not flames that mingle as they rise  
 Innocuous with their kindred skies ;  
 Some chemic lady-like solution,  
 Shown at the Royal Institution :  
 But such as still with ceaseless clamour,  
 Dance round the anvil and the hammer.  
 See him the comic muse invoking,  
 (The merry nymph with laughter choking)  
 While he exhibits at her shrine  
 The unhallowed form of Katherine ;

And there the Gorgon image plants,—  
Palladium of the termagants.  
He formed it of the rudest ore  
That lay in his exhaustless store,  
Nor from the crackling furnace drew,  
Which still the breath of genius blew,  
Till (to preserve the bright allusion)  
The mass was in a state of fusion.  
Then cast it in a Grecian mould,  
Once modelled from a living scold ;  
When from her shelly prison burst  
That finished vixen, Kate the curst.  
If practice e'er with precept tallies  
Could Shakespeare set down aught in malice ?  
From Nature all his forms he drew  
And held the mirror to her view ;  
And if an ugly wart arose,  
Or freckle upon Nature's nose,  
He flattered not the unsightly flaw,  
But marked and copied what he saw ;  
Strictly fulfilling all his duties  
Alike to blemishes and beauties :  
So that in Shakespeare's time 'tis plain  
The Katherines were scolds in grain,  
No females louder, fiercer, worse.  
*Now* contemplate the bright reverse ;  
And say amid the countless names  
Borne by contemporary dames,—  
Exotics, fetched from distant nations,  
Or good old English appellations,—  
Names hunted out from ancient books,  
Or found 'mid dairy-maids and cooks,  
Genteel, familiar, or pedantic,  
Grecian, Roman, or romantic,  
Christian, Infidel or Jew,  
Heroines, fabulous or true,  
Ruths, Rebeccas, Rachels, Sarahs,  
Charlottes, Harriets, Emmas, Claras,  
Auroras, Helens, Daphnes, Delias,  
Martias, Portias and Cornelias,

Nannys, Fannys, Jennys, Hetty's,  
 Dollys, Mollys, Biddys, Bettys,  
 Sacharissas, Melusinas,  
 Dulcibellas, Celestinas,—  
 Say is there one more free from blame,  
 One that enjoys a fairer fame,  
 One more endowed with Christian graces,  
 (Although I say it to our faces,  
 And flattery we don't delight in),  
 Than Catherine at this present writing?  
 Where then can all the difference be?  
 Where but between the K and C?  
 Between the graceful curving line  
 We now prefix to Catherine,  
 Which seems to keep in mild police,  
 Those rebel syllables in peace,  
 Describing in the line of duty  
 Both physical and moral beauty.  
 And that impracticable K  
 Who led them all so much astray?  
 Was never seen in black and white  
 A character more full of spite!  
 That stubborn back, to bend unskilful,  
 So perpendicularly wilful!  
 With angles hideous to behold  
 Like the sharp elbows of a scold,  
 In attitude, when words shall fail  
 To fight their battles tooth and nail.

In page the first you're sagely told  
 That "all that glitters is not gold;"  
 Fain would I quote one proverb more,—  
 "N'éveillez pas le chat qui dort."  
 Here some will smile as if suspicious  
 The simile was injudicious.  
 Because in C A T they trace  
 Alliance with the feline race.  
 But we the name alone inherit,  
 C has the latter, K the spirit;

And woe betide the man who tries,  
 Whether or no the spirit dies!  
 Though dormant long, it yet survives  
 With its full complement of lives;  
 The nature of the beast is still  
 To scratch and claw if not to kill;  
 For royal cats to low-born wrangling  
 Will superadd the gift of strangling.  
 Witness in modern times the fate  
 Of that unhappy potentate,  
 Who from his palace near the Pole  
 Where the chill waves of Neva roll,  
 Was snatched, while yet alive and merry,  
 And sent on board old Charon's ferry,  
 The Styx he traversed execrating  
 A Katherine of his own creating.

\* \* \* \* \*

In evil hour this simple Czar  
 Impelled by some malignant star  
 Bestowed upon his new Czarina  
 The fatal name of Katerina;  
 And as Monseigneur l'Archevêque  
 Chose to baptize her à la Grecque,  
 'Twas Katerina with a K:  
 He rued it to his dying day.  
 Nay died, as I observed before,  
 The sooner on that very score.  
 The Princess quickly learnt her cue,  
 Improved upon the part of shrew,  
 And as the plot began to thicken,  
 She rung his head off like a chicken;  
 In short this despot of a wife  
 Robbed the poor man of crown and life;  
 And robbing Peter paid not Paul,  
 But cleared the stage of great and small.

\* \* \* \* \*

Besides these genial pleasantries, many shorter poems on local and temporary subjects enlivened the

brilliant circle of which Miss Catherine Fanshawe formed so precious an ornament. Many have perished, as occasional verses will perish, however happy. I insert one specimen to show how her lively fancy could embellish the merest trifle.

When the Regent's Park was first laid out, she parodied the two well-known lines from Pope's "Elegy on an Unfortunate Lady:"

" Here shall the spring its earliest sweets bestow,  
Here the first roses of the year shall blow,"

and by only altering one word of the first line, and a single letter of the second, changed their entire meaning, and rendered them applicable to the new resort of the Londoners :

" Here shall the spring its earliest *coughs* bestow,  
Here the first *noses* of the year shall blow."

One wonders what Pope would have thought of such a parody. It is really a great honour. But would he have thought so ?

## XIV.

## MARRIED POETS.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING—ROBERT BROWNING.

MARRIED poets! Charming words are these, significant of congenial gifts, congenial labours, congenial tastes;—quiet and sweet resources of mind and of heart, a long future of happiness live in those two words. And the reality is as rare as it is charming. Married authors we have had of all ages and of all countries; from the Daciers, standing stiff and stately under their learning, as if it were a load, down to the Guizots, whose story is so pretty, that it would sound like a romance to all who did not know how often romance looks pale beside reality; from the ducal pair of Newcastle, walking stately and stiff under their strawberry-leafed coronets, to William and Mary Howitt, ornaments of a sect to whom coronets are an abomination. Married authors have been plentiful as blackberries, but married poets have been rare indeed! The last instance, too, was rather a warning than an example. When Caroline Bowles changed her own loved and honoured name to become the wife of the great and good man Robert Southey, all seemed to promise fairly, but a slow and fatal disease had seized him even before the wedding-

day, and darkened around him to the hour of his death. In the pair of whom I am now to speak, the very reverse of this sad destiny has happily befallen, and the health of the bride, which seemed gone for ever, has revived under the influence of the climate of Italy, of new scenes, new duties, a new and untried felicity.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning is too dear to me as a friend to be spoken of merely as a poetess. Indeed such is the influence of her manners, her conversation, her temper, her thousand sweet and attaching qualities, that they who know her best are apt to lose sight altogether of her learning and of her genius, and to think of her only as the most charming person that they have ever met. But she is known to so few, and the peculiar characteristics of her writings, their purity, their tenderness, their piety, and their intense feeling of humanity and of womanhood, have won for her the love of so many, that it will gratify them without, I trust, infringing on the sacredness of private intercourse to speak of her not wholly as a poetess, but a little as a woman. When in listening to the nightingale, we try to catch a glimpse of the shy songster, we are moved by a deeper feeling than curiosity.

My first acquaintance with Elizabeth Barrett commenced about fifteen years ago. She was certainly one of the most interesting persons that I had ever seen. Everybody who then saw her said the same; so that it is not merely the impression of my partiality, or my enthusiasm. Of a slight, delicate figure, with a shower of dark curls falling on either side of a most expressive face, large tender eyes

richly fringed by dark eyelashes, a smile like a sunbeam, and such a look of youthfulness, that I had some difficulty in persuading a friend, in whose carriage we went together to Chiswick, that the translatress of the "Prometheus" of Æschylus, the authoress of the "Essay on Mind," was old enough to be introduced into company, in technical language was *out*. Through the kindness of another invaluable friend, to whom I owe many obligations, but none so great as this, I saw much of her during my stay in town. We met so constantly and so familiarly that in spite of the difference of age, intimacy ripened into friendship, and after my return into the country, we corresponded freely and frequently, her letters being just what letters ought to be—her own talk put upon paper.

The next year was a painful one to herself and to all who loved her. She broke a blood-vessel upon the lungs which did not heal. If there had been consumption in the family, that disease would have supervened. There were no seeds of the fatal English malady in her constitution, and she escaped. Still, however, the vessel did not heal, and after attending her for above a twelvemonth at her father's house in Wimpole Street, Dr. Chambers, on the approach of winter, ordered her to a milder climate. Her eldest brother, a brother in heart and in talent worthy of such a sister, together with other devoted relatives, accompanied her to Torquay, and *there* occurred the fatal event which saddened her bloom of youth, and gave a deeper hue of thought and feeling, especially of devotional feeling, to her poetry. I have so often been asked what could be the shadow that had passed over that young heart, that now that



time has softened the first agony, it seems to me right that the world should hear the story of an accident in which there was much sorrow, but no blame.

Nearly a twelvemonth had passed, and the invalid, still attended by her affectionate companions, had derived much benefit from the mild sea-breezes of Devonshire. One fine summer morning her favourite brother, together with two other fine young men, his friends, embarked on board a small sailing-vessel for a trip of a few hours. Excellent sailors all, and familiar with the coast, they sent back the boatmen, and undertook themselves the management of the little craft. Danger was not dreamt of by any one; after the catastrophe no one could divine the cause, but in a few minutes after their embarkation, and in sight of their very windows, just as they were crossing the bar, the boat went down, and all who were in her perished. Even the bodies were never found. I was told by a party who were travelling that year in Devonshire and Cornwall, that it was most affecting to see on the corner houses of every village street, on every church-door, and almost on every cliff for miles and miles along the coast, handbills, offering large rewards for linen cast ashore marked with the initials of the beloved dead; for it so chanced that all the three were of the dearest and the best; one, I believe, an only son, the other the son of a widow.

This tragedy nearly killed Elizabeth Barrett. She was utterly prostrated by the horror and the grief, and by a natural but a most unjust feeling that she had been in some sort the cause of this great misery. It was not until the following year that she could be removed in an invalid carriage, and by journeys of

twenty miles a day, to her afflicted family and her London home. The house that she occupied at Torquay had been chosen as one of the most sheltered in the place. It stood at the bottom of the cliffs almost close to the sea; and she told me herself that during that whole winter the sound of the waves rang in her ears like the moans of one dying. Still she clung to literature and to Greek; in all probability she would have died without that wholesome diversion to her thoughts. Her medical attendant did not always understand this. To prevent the remonstrances of her friendly physician, Dr. Barry, she caused a small edition of Plato to be so bound as to resemble a novel. He did not know, skilful and kind though he were, that to her such books were not an arduous and painful study, but a consolation and a delight.

Returned to London, she began the life which she continued for so many years, confined to one large and commodious but darkened chamber, admitting only her own affectionate family and a few devoted friends (I, myself, have often joyfully travelled five-and-forty miles to see her, and returned the same evening without entering another house); reading almost every book worth reading in almost every language, and giving herself heart and soul to that poetry of which she seemed born to be the priestess.

Gradually her health improved. About four years ago she married Mr. Browning, and immediately accompanied him to Pisa. They then settled at Florence; and this summer I have had the exquisite pleasure of seeing her once more in London with a lovely boy at her knee, almost as well as ever, and telling tales of Italian rambles, of losing herself in

chestnut forests, and scrambling on mule-back up the sources of extinct volcanoes. May Heaven continue to her such health and such happiness !

In her abundant riches it is difficult to select extracts. If I did not know her scorn of her own earlier works (for she was the most precocious of authoresses, wrote largely at ten years old, and more than well at fifteen)—if I were not aware of her fastidiousness, I should be tempted to rescue certain exquisite stanzas which I find printed at the end of her first version of the “Prometheus Bound”—for, dissatisfied with her girlish translation of the grand old Greek, she recommenced her labour, and went fairly through the drama from the first line to the last ; but she has condemned the poem, and therefore I refrain.

Perhaps there is some personal preference in the selection I do make, since I first received it written in her own clear and beautiful manuscript on the fly-leaf of another volume, which she has also withdrawn from circulation. Besides being one of the earliest, it is amongst the most characteristic of her smaller poems.

#### THE SEAMEW.

How joyously the young seamew  
Lay dreaming on the waters blue,  
Whereon our little bark had thrown  
A forward shade, the only one,  
(But shadows aye will men pursue.)

Familiar with the waves, and free  
As if their own white foam were he ;  
His heart upon the heart of ocean  
Lay learning all its mystic motion  
And throbbing to the throbbing sea.

And such a brightness in his eye,  
As if the ocean and the sky  
Within him had lit up and nurst  
A soul God gave him not at first  
To comprehend their mystery.

We were not cruel, yet did sunder  
His white wing from the blue waves under,  
And bound it ;—while his fearless eyes  
Looked up to ours in calm surprise,  
As deeming us some ocean wonder.

We bore our ocean bird unto  
A grassy place where he might view  
The flowers that curtsy to the bees,  
The waving of the tall green trees,  
The falling of the silver dew.

The flowers of earth were pale to him  
Who had seen the rainbow fishes swim ;  
And when earth's dew around him lay  
He thought of ocean's wingéd spray  
And his eye waxéd pale and dim.

The green trees round him only made  
A prison, with their darksome shade :  
And drooped his wing and mournéd he  
For his own boundless glittering sea,—  
Albeit he knew not they could fade.

Then One her gladsome face did bring,  
Her gentle voice's murmuring,  
In ocean's stead his heart to move,  
And teach him what was human love—  
He thought it a strange mournful thing.

He lay down in his grief to die,  
(First looking to the sea-like sky  
That hath no waves,) because, alas !  
Our human touch did o'er him pass,  
And with our touch, our agony.

Perhaps the very finest of Mrs. Browning's poems is "The Lady Geraldine's Courtship," written (to meet the double exigency of completing the uniformity of the original two volumes, and of catching the vessel that was to carry the proofs to America) in the incredible space of twelve hours. That delicious ballad must have been lying unborn in her head and in her heart; but when we think of its length and of its beauty, the shortness of time in which it was put into form appears one of the most stupendous efforts of the human mind. And the writer was a delicate woman, a confirmed invalid, just dressed and supported for two or three hours from her bed to her sofa, and so back again. Let me add, too, that the exertion might have been avoided by a new arrangement of the smaller poems, if Miss Barrett would only have consented to place "Pan is dead" at the end of the first volume instead of the second. The difference does not seem much. But she had promised Mr. Kenyon that "Pan is dead" should conclude the collection; and Mr. Kenyon was out of town, and could not release her word. To this delicate conscientiousness we owe one of the most charming love-stories in any language. It is too long for insertion here; and I no more dare venture an abridgment than I should venture to break one of the crown jewels. So the Dead Pan shall take the place. It were mere pedantry to compare Schiller's "Gods of Greece" to this glorious gallery of classical statues, fresh and life-like, as if just struck into beauty by the chisel of Phidias.

I transcribe Mrs. Browning's own modest and graceful introduction.

## THE DEAD PAN.

"Excited by Schiller's 'Götter Griechenlands,' and partly founded on a well-known tradition mentioned in a treatise of Plutarch ("De'Oraculorum Defectu,") according to which, at the hour of the Saviour's agony, a cry of "Great Pan is Dead!" swept across the waves in the hearing of certain mariners, and the oracles ceased.

"It is in all veneration to the memory of the deathless Schiller that I oppose a doctrine still more dishonouring to poetry than to Christianity.

"As Mr. Kenyon's graceful and harmonious paraphrase of the German poem was the first occasion of my turning my thoughts in this direction, I take advantage of the pretence to indulge my feelings (which overflow on other grounds), by inscribing my lyric to that dear friend and relative, with the earnestness of appreciating esteem as well as of affectionate gratitude.—E. B. B."

Gods of Hellas! gods of Hellas!  
 Can ye listen in your silence?  
 Can your mystic voices tell us  
 Where ye hide? In floating islands  
 With a wind that evermore  
 Keeps you out of sight of shore?  
 Pan, Pan is dead.

In what revels are ye sunken  
 In old Æthiopia?  
 Have the Pygmies made you drunken,  
 Bathing in Mandragora  
 Your divine pale lips, that shiver  
 Like the lilies in the river?  
 Pan, Pan is dead.

Do ye sit there still in slumber,  
 In gigantic Alpine rows?  
 The black poppies out of number,  
 Nodding, dripping from your brows  
 To the red lees of your wine,  
 And so kept alive and fine?

Pan, Pan is dead.

Or lie crushed your stagnant corpses  
 Where the silver spheres roll on,  
 Stung to life by centric forces,  
 Thrown like rays out from the sun?  
 While the smoke of your old altars  
 Is the shroud that round you welters?  
 Great Pan is dead.

"Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas!"  
 Said the old Hellenic tongue,  
 Said the hero-oaths, as well as  
 Poet's songs the sweetest sung!  
 Have ye grown deaf in a day?  
 Can ye speak not yea or nay—  
 Since Pan is dead?

Do ye leave your rivers flowing  
 All alone, O Naiades!  
 While your drenched locks dry slow in  
 This cold feeble sun and breeze?  
 Not a word the Naiads say  
 Though the rivers run for aye,—  
 For Pan is dead.

From the glooming of the oak-wood,  
 O, ye Dryads, could ye flee?  
 At the rushing thunder-stroke, would  
 No sob tremble through the tree?  
 Not a word the Dryads say,  
 Though the forests wave for aye.  
 For Pan is dead.

Have ye left the mountain places,  
 Oreads wild for other tryst?  
 Shall we see no sudden faces  
 Strike a glory through the mist?  
 Not a sound the silence thrills  
 Of the everlasting hills.

Pan, Pan is dead.

O, twelve gods of Plato's vision  
 Crowned to starry wanderings,—  
 With your chariots in procession  
 And your silver clash of wings.  
 Very pale ye seem to rise,  
 Ghosts of Grecian deities,  
 Now Pan is dead.

Jove! that right hand is unloaded,  
 Whence the thunder did prevail.  
 While in idiotcy of godhead  
 Thou art staring, the stars pale!  
 And thine eagle blind and old  
 Roughs his feathers in the cold.  
 Pan, Pan is dead.

Where, O Juno! is the glory  
 Of thy regal look and tread?  
 Will they lay for evermore, thee  
 On thy dim straight golden bed?  
 Will thy queendom all lie hid  
 Meekly under either lid?  
 Pan, Pan is dead.

Ha, Apollo! Floats his golden  
 Hair, all mist-like where he stands;  
 While the Muses hang enfolding  
 Knees and foot with faint wild hands.  
 'Neath the clanging of thy bow  
 Niobe looked lost as thou!  
 Pan, Pan is dead.



Shall the casque with its brown iron  
 Pallas' broad blue eyes eclipse,  
 And no hero take inspiring  
 From the God-greek of her lips?  
 'Neath her olive dost thou sit,  
 Mars the mighty, cursing it?

Pan, Pan is dead.

Bacchus, Bacchus! on the Panther  
 He swoons, bound with his own vines!  
 And his Mænads slowly saunter,  
 Head aside among the pines,  
 While they murmur dreamingly,  
 Evohe—ah—evohe!

Ah, Pan is dead.

Neptune lies beside his trident,  
 Dull and senseless as a stone:  
 And old Pluto deaf and silent,  
 Is cast out into the sun.  
 Ceres smiles stern thereat,  
 We *all* now are desolate"—

Now Pan is dead.

Aphrodite! dead and driven  
 As thy native foam thou art;  
 With the cestus long done heaving  
 On the white calm of thine heart!  
*At Adonis!* At that shriek  
 Not a tear runs down her cheek—

Pan, Pan is dead.

And the doves we used to know from  
 One another—huddled lie  
 Frore as taken in a snow-storm  
 Close beside her tenderly,—  
 As if each had weakly tried  
 Once to kiss her ere he died.

Pan, Pan is dead.

What, and Hermes ? Time enthralleth  
 All thy cunning, Hermes, thus,—  
 And the ivy blindly crawleth  
 Round thy brave caduceus ?  
 Hast thou no new message for us  
 Full of thunder and Jove's glories ?  
                   Nay ! Pan is dead

Crownèd Cybele's great turret  
 Rocks and crumbles on her head :  
 Roar the lions of her chariot  
 Toward the wilderness unfed :  
 Scornful children are not mute,—  
 “ Mother, mother, walk afoot,—  
                   Since Pan is dead.”

In the fiery-hearted centre  
 Of the solemn Universe,  
 Ancient Vesta,—who could enter  
 To consume thee with this curse ?  
 Drop thy grey chin on thy knee,  
 O, thou palsied Mystery !  
                   For Pan is dead.

Gods ! we vainly do adjure you,—  
 Ye return nor words nor sign :  
 Not a votary could secure you  
 Even a grave for your Divine !  
 Not a grave to show thereby  
*Here those grey old gods do lie.*  
                   Pan, Pan is dead.

Even that Greece who took your wages  
 Calls the Obolus outworn,  
 And the hoarse deep-throated ages  
 Laugh your godships unto scorn—  
 And the poets do disclaim you  
 Or grow colder if they name you—  
                   And Pan is dead.

Gods bereavèd, gods belated,—  
 With your purples rent asunder !  
 Gods discrowned and desecrated,—  
 Disinherited of thunder !  
 Now the goats may climb and crop  
 The soft grass on Ida's top—  
                                     Now Pan is dead.

Calm of old, the bark went onward  
 When a cry more loud than wind  
 Rose up, deepened, and swept sunward,  
 From the piled Dark behind :  
 And the sun shrank and grew pale  
 Breathed against by the great wail —  
                                     “ Pan, Pan is dead.”

And the rowers from the benches  
 Fell, each shuddering on his face—  
 While departing Influences  
 Struck a cold back through the place :  
 And the shadow of the ship  
 Reeled along the passive deep—  
                                     Pan, Pan is dead.

I have no room for the rest, but I must find a place for one exquisite stanza :

O, ye vain false gods of Hellas,  
 Ye are silent evermore !  
 And I dash down this old chalice  
 Whence libations ran of yore.  
 See ! the wine crawls in the dust  
 Worm-like—as your glories must !  
                                     Since Pan is dead.

The last edition of Mrs. Browning's poems closes with three-and-forty sonnets *from the Portuguese*—glowing with passion, melting with tenderness. True love was never more fitly sung:

What can I give thee back, O liberal  
 And princely giver!... who hast brought the gold  
 And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,  
 And laid them on the outside of the wall  
 For such as I to take or leave withal  
 In unexpected largesse? Am I cold,  
 Ungrateful, that for these most manifold  
 High gifts I render nothing back at all?  
 Not so. Not cold!—but very poor instead!  
 Ask God, who knows! for frequent tears have run  
 The colours from my life, and left so dead  
 And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done  
 To give the same as pillow to thy head.  
 Go farther! Let it serve to trample on.

There is a deep truth in this which follows :

Yet love, mere love, is beautiful indeed  
 And worthy of acceptance. Fire is bright  
 Let temple burn or flax! An equal light  
 Leaps in the flame from cedar plant or weed.  
 And love is fire: and when I say at need,  
*I love thee*—mark!—*I love thee!* in thy sight  
 I stand transfigured, glorified aright  
 With conscience of the new rays that proceed  
 Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low  
 In love, when love the lowest: meanest creatures  
 Who love God, God accepts while loving so.  
 And what I *feel*, across the inferior features,  
 Of what I *am* doth flash itself, and show  
 How that great *work of love* enhances Nature's.

The same visit to London that brought me acquainted with my beloved friend, Elizabeth Barrett, first gave me a sight of Mr. Browning. It was at a period that forms an epoch in the annals of the modern drama—the first representation of “*Ion*.”

I had the honour and pleasure of being the inmate of Mr. and Mrs. Serjeant Talfourd (my accomplished

friend has since worthily changed his professional title—but his higher title of poet is indelible)—having been, I believe, amongst the first who had seen that fine play in manuscript. The dinner party consisted merely of Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Landor, and I think Mr. Forster. By a singular coincidence it was our host's birthday, and no one present can forget the triumph of the evening—a triumph of no common order as regarded the number, the quality, or the enthusiasm of the audience; the boxes being crammed to the ceiling, and the pit filled as in an elder day with critics and gentlemen.

A large party followed the poet home to supper, a party comprising distinguished persons of almost every class; lawyers, authors, actors, artists, all were mingled around that splendid board; healths were drunk and speeches spoken, and it fell to the lot of the young author of "Paracelsus" to respond to the toast of "The Poets of England." That he performed this task with grace and modesty, and that he looked still younger than he was, I well remember; but we were not introduced, and I knew him only by those successive works which redeemed the pledge that "Paracelsus" had given, until this very summer, when going to London purposely to meet my beloved friend, I was by her presented to her husband. Ah! I hope it will not be fifteen years before we look each other in the face again!

I never see those two volumes of his collected works which correspond so prettily with the last edition of Mrs. Browning's poems—a sort of literary twins—without wishing again and again, and again, that we had actors and a stage. Besides "The Blot

on the Scutcheon " which has been successfully produced at two metropolitan theatres, "Colombe's Birthday" and "Luria" show not only what he has done, but what with the hope of a great triumph before him he might yet do as a dramatist. I could show what I mean by transcribing the last act of "Colombe's Birthday." I could make my meaning clearer still by transcribing the whole play. But as these huge borrowings are out of the question, I must limit myself to a couple of dramatic lyrics each of which tells its own story :

MY LAST DUCHESS.—FERRARA.

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall  
Looking as if she were alive ; I call  
That piece a wonder now : Frà Pandolf's hands  
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
Will't please you sit and look at her ? I said  
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read  
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
The curtain I have drawn for you but I),  
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
How such a glance came there ; so not the first  
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek : perhaps  
Frà Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps  
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint  
Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
Half-flush that dies along her throat ;" such stuff  
Was courtesy she thought ; and cause enough  
For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
A heart—how shall I say ?—too soon made glad,  
Too easily imprest ; she liked whate'er  
She look'd on, and her looks went everywhere.

Sir, 'twas all one! my favour at her breast  
The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
The bough of cherries some officious fool  
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
She rode with round the terrace—all and each  
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,  
Or blush at least. She thanked men—good; but thanked  
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred years old name  
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will  
Quite clear to such an one, and say: "Just this  
Or that in you disgusts me;—here you miss  
Or there exceed the mark;" and if she let  
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set  
Her wits to yours forsooth and make excuse,  
—E'en then would be some stooping, and I chuse  
Never to stoop. Oh, Sir, she smiled no doubt  
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands,  
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet  
The company below, then. I repeat  
The Count your master's known munificence  
Is ample warrant that no just pretence  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
Together down, Sir! Notice Neptune though  
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me.

Poor dead Duchess! and poor living one too! for  
that complaisant Ambassador who listened so silently  
would hardly give warning, even if the father were  
likely to take it; and we feel as they walk down the  
Palace stairs that another victim comes.

The pathos of the next lyric is of a different order.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX.

[16—.]

I sprang to the stirrup, and Ioris and he ;  
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three ;  
“ Good speed ! ” cried the watch as the gate-bolts undrew,  
“ Speed ! ” echoed the wall to us galloping through ;  
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest  
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other : we kept the great pace  
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place,  
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,  
Then shortened each stirrup and set the pique right,  
Rebuckled the check-strap, chained slacker the bit,  
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

’Twas moonset at starting, but while we drew near  
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear ;  
At Boom a great yellow star came out to see ;  
At Düffeld ’twas morning as plain as could be ;  
And from Mechelm church-steeple we heard the half chime,  
So Ioris broke silence with “ Yet there is time ! ”

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,  
And against him the cattle stood black every one,  
To stare through the mist at us galloping past,  
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,  
With resolute shoulders, each butting away  
The haze as some bluff river headland its spray.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back  
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track ;  
And one eye’s black intelligence,—ever that glance  
O’er its white edge at me, his own master, askance !  
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon  
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Ioris, “ Stay spur !  
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault’s not in her  
We’ll remember at Aix ”—for one heard the quick wheeze  
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck, and staggering knees,  
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,  
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.



So we were left galloping, Ioris and I,  
Past Loos and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky ;  
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,  
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff ;  
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,  
And "Gallop," gasped Ioris, "for Aix is in sight !

"How they'll greet us !"—and all in a moment his roan  
Rolled neck and crop over, lay dead as a stone ;  
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight  
Of the news, which alone could save Aix from her fate,  
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,  
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall,  
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,  
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,  
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer ;  
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise bad or good,  
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is friends flocking round,  
As I sate with his head twixt my knees on the ground,  
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,  
As I poured down his throat one last measure of wine,  
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)  
Was no more than his due who brought good news from  
Ghent.

Although we have cause to hope that the good steed recovered, yet his trial of speed and strength is too painful to conclude with. I add a few lines from the "Englishman in Italy," a long poem so pulpy, so juicy, so full of bright colour and of rich detail, that it is just like a picture by Rubens. Selection is difficult—but I choose the passage in question because its exceeding truth was first pointed out to me by Mr. Ruskin.

But to-day not a boat reached Salerno,  
    So back to a man  
Came our friends with whose help in the vineyards  
    Grape-harvest began :  
In the vat half-way up on our house-side  
    Like blood the juice spins,  
While your brother all bare-legged is dancing  
    Till breathless he grins  
Dead beaten in effort on effort  
    To keep the grapes under,  
Since still when he seems all but master  
    In pours the fresh plunder  
From girls who keep coming and going  
    With basket on shoulder—

\* \* \* \*

Meanwhile see the grape-bunch they've brought you,—  
    The rain water slips  
O'er the heavy blue bloom on each globe,  
    Which the wasp to your lips  
Still follows with fretful persistence—  
    Nay taste while awake  
This half of a curd-white smooth cheese-ball,  
    That peels flake by flake  
Like an onion's each smoother and whiter ;  
    Next sip this weak wine  
From the thin green glass flask with its stopper  
    A leaf of the vine—  
And end with the prickly pear's red flesh,  
    That leaves through its juice  
The stony black seeds on your pearl teeth—

and so on.

## XV.

## PROSE PASTORALS.

## THE LOST CANE.

SIR PHILIP SYDNEY'S *ARCADIA*—ISAAC WALTON'S *COMPLETE ANGLER*.

DURING this warm summer, and above all during this dry burning harvest weather, which makes my poor little roadside cottage (the cottage which for that reason, amongst others, I am about to leave) so insupportable from glare, and heat, and dust in the fine season, I have the frequent, almost daily habit of sallying forth into the charming green lane, the grassy, turfy, shady lane of which I have before made mention, and of which I share the use and the enjoyment with the gipsies. Last summer I was able to walk thither, but in the winter I was visited by rheumatism and cannot walk so far without much heat and fatigue; so my old pony-phaeton conveys me and my little maid, and my pet dog Fanchon, and my little maid's needle-work of flounces and fineries, and my books and writing-case, as far as the road leads, and sometimes a little farther; and we proceed to a certain green hillock under down-hanging elms, close shut in between a bend in the lane on our own

side, and an amphitheatre of oak and ash and beech trees opposite; where we have partly found and partly scooped out for ourselves a turfy seat and turfy table redolent of wild thyme and a thousand fairy flowers, delicious in its coolness, its fragrance and its repose.

Behind the thick hedge on the one hand stretch fresh water-meadows, where the clear brook wanders in strange meanders between clumps of alder-bushes and willow-pollards; fringed by the blue forget-me-not, the yellow loosestrife, the purple willow-herb, and the creamy tufts of the queen of the meadow; on the other hand we catch a glimpse over gates of large tracts of arable land, wheat, oat, clover and bean fields, sloping upward to the sun; and hear, not too closely, the creaking waggon and the sharpening scythe, the whistle, the halloo, and the laugh, all that forms the pleasant sound of harvest labour. Just beyond the bend in the lane too, are two fires, belonging to two distinct encampments of gipsies; and the children, dogs, and donkeys of these wandering tribes are nearly the only living things that come into sight, exciting Fanchon now to pretty defiance, now to prettier fear.

This is my constant resort on summer afternoons; and there I have the habit of remaining engaged either with my book or with my pen until the decline of the sun gives token that we may gather up our several properties, and that, aided by my staff, I may take a turn or two in the smoothest part of the lane and proceed to meet the pony-chaise at a gate leading to the old Manor House which forms the usual termination of my walk.

Now this staff, one of the oldest friends I have in the world, is pretty nearly as well known as myself in our Berkshire village.

Sixty years ago it was a stick of quality and belonged to a certain Duchess Dowager of Atholl, that Duchess of Atholl who was in her own right Baroness Strange and Lady of Mann, with whom we had some acquaintance because her youngest son married a first cousin of my father's and took the name of Aynsley as his wife had done before him, as a condition of inheriting an estate in Northumberland. I have a dim recollection of the Duchess, much such an one as Dr. Johnson had of Queen Anne, as "a stately lady in black silk." Well! in her time the stick was a stick of distinction, but on her leaving her Berkshire house it was left behind and huddled by an auctioneer into a lot of old umbrellas, watering-pots, and flower-stands, which my father bought for a song. I believe that he made the purchase chiefly for the sake of this stick, which he presented to my mother's faithful and favourite old housekeeper, Mrs. Mosse, who lived in our family sixty years and was sufficiently lame to find such a support of great use and comfort in her short and unfrequent walks. During her time, and for her sake, I first contracted a familiar and friendly acquaintanceship with this ancient piece of garniture. It was indeed a stick of some pretension, of the order commonly called a crook, such as may be seen upon a chimney-piece figuring in the hand of some trim shepherdess of Dresden china. What the wood might have been I cannot tell; light, straight, slender, strong it certainly was, polished and veined, and as I first remember it,

yellowish in colour, although it became darker as it advanced in age. It was amongst the tallest of its order ; nearly five feet high, and headed with a crook of ivory, bound to the wood by a broad silver rim—as ladylike a stick as could be seen on a summer’s day. The only one of the sort I ever met with had belonged to the great-grandmother of a friend of mine, and was handed down as a family relique ; that crook, probably of the same age as ours, was more ornate and elaborate, it had a curious carved handle, not unlike the hilt of a sword, decorated with a leather tassel, so to say a stick-knot.

Well, poor Mossy died ; and the stick precious upon her account became doubly so when my own dear mother took to using it during her latter days, and when she also followed her old servant to a happier world. And then everybody knows how the merest trifles which have formed part of the daily life of the loved and lost, especially those things which they have touched, are cherished and cared for and put aside ; how we dare not look upon them for very love ; and how by some accident that nobody can explain they come to light in the course of time, and after a momentary increase of sadness help to familiarise and render pleasant the memory by which they are endeared. It is a natural and right process, like the springing of a flower upon a grave. So the stick re-appeared in the hall, and from some whim which I have never rightly understood myself, I who had no more need of such a supporter than the youngest woman in the parish, who was indeed the best walker of my years for a dozen miles round, and piqued myself not a little upon so being, took a fancy

to use this stick in my own proper person, and most pertinaciously carried this fancy into execution. Much was I laughed at for this crotchet, and I laughed too. Friends questioned, strangers stared ; but impassive to stare or to question I remained constant to my supporter. Except when I went to London (for I paid so much homage to public opinion as to avoid such a display *there*) I should as soon have thought of walking out without my bonnet as without my stick. That stick was my inseparable companion.

To be sure we met with a few misadventures in our companionship. Once I left my prop behind me in a marquee at a cricket match, and it had well nigh been tossed away amongst the tent-poles ; once it was stuck against a bush in a copse where I happened to be nutting, and got well thrashed (according to the notable example of Sancho with the galley-slaves), in company with its brethren the hazel-rods ; once it was lost in a fair (I am not sure that it was not cried upon that occasion) ; often forgotten in halls and vestibules ; and once fairly stolen by a mischievous schoolboy from a friend's portico.

This last calamity cost me a ten-mile walk, undertaken with an alacrity which proved how little I really needed my trusty supporter. Before I had discovered my loss—for that same prop of mine had passed many a summer night leaning against the pillars of that portico—before I had even dreamt of the mishap, the papa and mamma of the delinquent chancing to have old-fashioned notions of good breeding, sent a servant with a magnificent note in the third person, setting forth in the choicest terms their regret and displeasure, deprecating my anger,

and entreating me to fix the day and the hour on which they and the culprit might be permitted to wait upon me to renew their excuses in person. Such a note! In diction, in calligraphy, in folding, it would have done honour to "The Polite Letter-writer:" the paper stamped with an oak-wreath, and breathing of attar of roses, and the seal as big as that bearing Her Majesty's arms from a public office, were real works of art. I could as soon have answered such a letter, or have sate in state to receive the threatened apology, as I could have taken a journey in the air upon a broomstick. Greatly preferring the offence to the reparation, I had nothing for it but to forestall the visit, shake hands with the poor boy, who turned out a fine spirited lad, and try, by laughing over the matter with his parents, to bring about a general pacification, in which attempt, they being less formidable in person than on paper, I happily succeeded.

Manifold have been our escapes. One was from an adventure natural to the stick-genus—a battle.

Walking past a farm-house by the side of a fair neighbour with no other companions than our dogs;—hers a beautiful King Charles, mine a no less beautiful and far rarer spaniel of the old brown cocking breed, Flush, the father of Fanchon;—our poor pets were set upon by a furious yard-dog unluckily let loose, a tremendous mastiff, dangerous to man and beast. The King Charles fled to his mistress, who instantly caught him up. Flush stood his ground, and would, I verily believe, have been killed but for me and my weapon. We did battle valiantly, and contrived to keep the foe at bay until, in a space



of time which seemed very long, and was, I suppose, very short, the din brought forth the farmer, who, in the midst of a storm of screaming, scolding, growling, and barking, choked off his brute, and left my friend and me, the danger being over, so frightened that we could hardly get home. Although she had naturally consulted the safety of her own pet first, she had done her duty womanfully, so far as screaming went. That was the first fight I ever was in in my life, and I hope it will be the last.

Another misfortune, so to say personal, which befel my staff was the loss of its own head, the ivory crook, which came off in the act of pulling down a rich branch of woodbine from the top of a hedge. A deep muddy ditch received the poor crook, which sank instantly, and in spite of efforts many and various, could never be recovered. The worst part of this mutilation was, as often happens to living patients, the cure. Being sent to a parasol-shop to have a new crook put on, the stupid people first docked many inches of its height, and then stuck on so clumsily a heavy bone umbrella-top, that it fell off in a few days of its own accord without any accident at all. And the poor stick might have remained for ever headless and "curtailed of his fair proportion," but that a friend of mine (one of those persons who knows how to do kind things in little as well as in great) happened to remember that she had an ebony top that would just fit it; and her husband with equal kindness, completed the good action by fastening on the shining black knob so adroitly, that, although it has been now four or five years in wear, it remains as firm as the first day, looking only a

little graver, and more fit for the poor old mistress, who, having at first taken to a staff in sport, is now so lame as to be unable to walk without one.

And since the black head has supplanted the white one, another association has come to endear this friend of sixty years. A little boy, called Henry, the child of the house (son by the way to the hemmer of flounces) has, ever since he has been four years old, watched my ways, and ministered unbidden to my wants and fancies. Long before he could open the outer door, before indeed he was half the height of the wand in question, there he would stand, the stick in one hand, and if it were summer time, a flower in the other, waiting for my going out, the pretty Saxon boy with his upright figure, his golden hair, his eyes like two stars, and his bright intelligent smile! We were so used to see him there, silent and graceful as a Queen's page, that when he returned to school after the holidays, and somebody else presented the stick and the rose, I hardly cared to take them. It seemed as if something was wrong, I missed him so. Most punctual of petted children! What would Henry have said to day?

I might have observed, if I had only seen what passed before my eyes, that something was amiss in our small household; that Sarah answered the bell, and that the hemmer of flounces, when she did appear, seemed flurried and fatigued. But I was thinking of Sir Philip Sydney, of the "Defence of Poetry," of the "Arcadia," and of my own resolution to proceed to the green lane, and to dissect that famous pastoral, and select from the mass, which even to myself I hardly confessed to be ponderous,

such pages as might suit an age that by no means partakes of my taste for folios. So I said to her, "That the afternoon being cool, and I less lame than usual, I thought we should not need Sam and the pony-chaise, but that I could manage to walk by the help of my stick."

At that word out burst the terrible tidings. My stick, my poor old stick, my life-long friend, the faithful companion of so many walks, was missing, was gone, was lost ! Last night, on our return from the lane, the place in the pony-chaise where Sam and I had carefully deposited it was found vacant. Sam himself, that model of careful drivers and faithful servants, had run back the moment he had unharnessed the pony, had retraced every step of the road, beating the ground like a pointer, questioning everybody, offering rewards, visiting ale-house and beer-house (places that, without special cause, Sam never does visit), to make proclamation of the loss, and finishing all by getting up at four o'clock in the morning, and beating the beaten ground over again. She herself, who so seldom stirs without me, and so seldom lets me stir without her, that she may pass for my shadow, or (without offence be it spoken) for a sort of walking-stick herself, she had sallied forth, visiting lane and field, road and meadow, questioning reaper and gipsy, a sort of living hue and cry.

"And really, Ma'am," quoth she, "there is some comfort in the interest the people take in the stick ! If it were anything alive, the pony, or Fanchon, or little Henry, or we ourselves, they could not be more sorry. Master Brent, Ma'am, at the top of the street,

he promises to speak to everybody ; so does William Wheeler, who goes everywhere ; and Mrs. Bromley, at the shop ; and the carrier and the postman. I dare say the whole parish knows it by this time ! I have not been outside the gate to-day, but a dozen people have asked me if we had heard of *our* stick ! It must turn up soon. If one had but the slightest notion where it was lost ! I do declare, Ma'am," continued she, interrupting her lamentations, "that you don't seem to be so much troubled about the poor stick as I am !" And with all her regard for me, I think she was a little scandalised at my philosophy.

"Why you and Sam seem to have done all that can be done," replied I ; "and perhaps if we go into the lane we may hear some tidings of my poor staff, for I shall be sorry to lose such an old friend !"

"Ah !" said she, "if one did but know where it dropt out of the chaise !"

And so we set forth, I with a new stick of Sam's purveying, a provisional stick, whose very roughness and imperfection proved that that faithful adherent by no means despaired of recovering my legitimate supporter.

My little damsel was not wrong in accusing me of being calmer than she thought quite becoming under so severe a calamity ; but as her inquietude and nervousness proceeded mainly from the state of feverish and impatient expectation, the mixture of hope and fear, in which she had passed the last twenty hours, so the absence of suspense and expectation had much to do with my resignation. I had some suspicion as to the place in which the stick had dropt, and no great hope of finding it.

Day by day, as the sun went down, we had the habit of being taken up at the gate of the short avenue that leads to the old Manor House; an abrupt turn, where the soft turf of the wide lane ends, and the gravel road begins. This road, not much frequented in general, is full of the harvest population during this harvest month; groups of reapers, men and women, full-grown girl and half-grown boy, and little child—the little child who watches by the baby in the cradle whilst the mother reaps. On that side, too, they had just begun to carry the yellow sheaves which studded so richly the great open corn-fields that bordered one edge of the winding road, as the grounds of the old mansion, with their tall elms and rustic paling, bordered the other. Just in front, crossing the road, and meandering after its own wilful fashion, came the brook, traversed, at the choice of the wayfarer, by a low two-arched bridge, or by a wide shallow ford, just below.

Now this has been a summer of great drought hereabouts, and we suffer much from summer drought in the cottage which we are about to leave, as places that feel most the winter damp very frequently do; the mud of one season baking into a brick-like clay at another; the ponds becoming dry under the same sunny influence, and the wells (for we have two) failing altogether just when they are most wanted. I think the thing of all others which has most reconciled me to quitting the poor old place—the old home with all its faults—is the contrast which the new cottage offers as to water. There we shall have a pump that is never dry; two springs to which the whole parish resorts; the men with yokes and pails,

the women with pitchers, almost classical ; two clear gushing springs, a pond and a river !

However, we have not yet moved, and this delicious wateriness to come has little profited us during this sultry August. The fourfooted part of our family has particularly felt, not the absolute want—for we fetch, and beg, and buy, and all but steal—but the limitation of that prime luxury of nature. So Sam always drives through the ford to cool the pony's feet, and commonly stops long enough in the middle to allow of his enjoying a good drink of the clear glittering pool ; whilst Fanchon, who during the rainy season is as tender of wetting her pretty paws as a cat, has latterly condescended to walk out of the little carriage, in which it is her delight to set perched, to walk trembling and gingerly—something as a fine lady steps out of a bathing-machine, but still to walk down the steps, and drop into the water—drinking in the same slow, mincing, half-reluctant manner, but still drinking, and then pausing upon the brink to be taken home. Yesterday evening, I remembered that instead of walking leisurely down the steps, stopping half a minute upon one, and a whole minute upon the other, according to her usual mode, poor Fanchon, doubtless in a paroxysm of thirst, had fairly jumped out of the phaeton, giving the whole vehicle such a jolt as her weight hardly seemed capable of producing. Then and there I suspected went the stick ; carried off by the slow current, until it became entangled by the sedges on the banks, or sank in one of the deep pools not unfrequent in the stream. So I gave up my poor old friend as drowned beyond all hope of resuscitation, and tried to comfort my little

damsel by setting her a very creditable example of resignation.

It was hardly possible to be quite unhappy in a scene of so much healthy stir and bustle as this usually quiet lane exhibited.

My friends the gipsies had no less than three camps with fires glimmering under the hedge, looking beautiful in the dark shadow, as fire always does, or sending up wreaths of curling smoke among the trees, a thin blue vapour more beautiful still. There they were in every picturesque form of work or idleness, making saucepans, weaving baskets, lying on the grass: three camps at small but not unfriendly distance, with one moveable house, a grey horse, and two donkeys.

Then the wheat-carrying, threatened yesterday, was in full activity to-day; and waggons, some loaded, some empty, passed up and down the lane, escorted by stalwart carters and shouting boys. Reapers, too, were there in abundance passing to and fro, and troops of children leasing in the cleared fields, and following the waggons along the lane. Most of these good people had heard of our loss; and questioned my little damsel as to its recovery. Our friends the gipsies were particularly interested in the subject; and there was one black-haired urchin, the laziest of the tribe, a musical genius whom I had never seen before without a fiddle in his hands, but whom we now found, by way of variety, twanging a jew's-harp, who intermitted his melody to affirm with so much assurance that he had passed his whole day in the search, that it was utterly impossible not to give him sixpence.

Well! we at last sate down on our old turf seats not far from the entrance of a field where an accident had evidently taken place; a loaded waggon must have knocked against the gate, and spilt some of its topmost sheaves. The sheaves were taken away, but the place was strewn with relics of the upset, and a little harvest of the long yellow straw and the rich brown ears remained to tempt the gleaners; and as we were talking over this mischance, and our own, and I was detailing my reasons for believing that my poor stick had found a watery grave, we became aware of two little girls, who stole timidly and quietly up to the place, and began gladly and thankfully to pick up the scattered corn.

Poor little things, we knew them well! we had known their father, dead of consumption scarcely a month ago; and affecting it was to see these poor children, delicate girls of seven and five years old, already at work to help their widowed mother, and rejoicing over the discovery of these few ears of fallen wheat, as if it were the gold mines of California. A drove of pigs was looming in the distance; and my little damsel flung down her work, and sprang up at once to help the poor children. She has a taste for helping people, has my little maid, and puts her whole heart and soul into such kindnesses. It was worth something to see how she pounced upon every straggling straw, clearing away all round the outside, and leaving the space within for the little girls. She even hinted to me that my new stick would be an efficient weapon against the pigs; and I might have found myself engaged in another combat, but that the ground was cleared before the drove came near.



Pleasant it was to see her zealous activity, and the joy and surprise of the little creatures, who, weak, timid and lonely, had till then only collected about a dozen ears, when they found themselves loaded with more than they could carry. Their faded frocks—not mourning frocks, to wear black every day for a father is too great a luxury for the poor—their frocks were by her contrivance pinned up about them, filled with the golden wheat-ears, and the children went home happy. That home had once been full of comfort and of plenty, for John Kemp, a gentleman's servant, had married the daughter of a small farmer, and had set up a little trade as a baker and shopkeeper. Civil, honest, sober and industrious, the world went well with them for a while, and the shop prospered. But children came many and fast, their largest debtor died insolvent, a showy competitor set up next door, and long before John Kemp was attacked by the fatal malady of England which finally carried him off, poverty had knocked hard at his door. The long illness, the death, the funeral had still farther exhausted their small means, and now little was left, except that which is best of all, strong family affection, an unstained name, an humble reliance upon Providence, and those habits of virtuous industry and courage to take the world as it is, which seldom fail to win an honest living. The mother and the elder brother undertook the baking and the shop, the eldest daughter carried round the bread, the two next brothers were working in the fields, and the youngest of all we have seen in their efforts to contribute to the general support. Well! it is a hard trial, but it is a good education, an education that can hardly fail to come to good. Many

a rich mother might be proud of the two gleaners that we have seen this afternoon. They so pleased and so thankful to carry their poor store to that poor home, they carried thither better things than wheat.

In the meanwhile, where, amid all this harvest work, is the "Arcadia?" Between asking questions and answering them, listening to condolences and thanking the condolers, talking to leasers and leasing ourselves, the afternoon has slipt away with little thought of the good knight, Sir Philip Sydney. The sun, which hardly showed his bright face until we reached the lane, is now setting in his glory, and we must wind our way to the avenue-gate, or we may chance to have a hue and cry sent forth about us as lost ourselves. So home we came.

About ten o'clock, after some *jiffing* of the latch, a pattering of childish feet, and an eager consultation of childish voices, the front gate was tremblingly opened, and after a short pause another little sound of unassured footsteps, and another brief dialogue, a low knock was heard at the hall-door; then the little feet advanced into the house, and the little tongues gained courage to tell their good news. Mary Kemp and her brother Tom had brought back the lost stick.

It appeared that the child had overheard my suspicion, that the missing wand had been dropt in the brook during Fanchon's immersion, and had confided the story to her brother Tom as soon as he returned from his labours in the harvest field. Tom, a bold urchin of ten years old, happened to be one of those boys who may be properly called amphibious; pools, puddles, ponds, seemed to be his natural element, and paddling in the brook his prime enjoyment. Before

he left off his petticoats, he haunted the water-side, angling with a bit of string tied on a willow rod, and a crooked pin for a hook, and what is more wonderful, contriving to catch with that inartificial contrivance such small fry, roach and dace and minnows, as the stream afforded. Tom knew every inch of the brook, and charmed at the very sound, forgot his long day's work, and set forth on the search, without even stopping to eat his supper. His little sister followed him to the meadows, and just where the winding rivulet takes a bold sweep round a woody cape of rich pasture, where the willows and the alders are mixed with tall bulrushes, thither the slow current had carried it, and there it stuck, caught between two stalks of the seeded meadow-sweet, and still farther entangled by the leaves of the water-lily, a part of whose long slimy stalk, glistening in the moonlight, remained twisted around the ebony knob, a token of its involuntary bath, its perils and its escape. I do not know whether the poor children, my little damsel, or I, were most rejoiced at the conclusion of the adventure.

But what room has it left for Sir Philip?

Alas! that bravest and most chivalrous of poets, that younger, gentler, more lettered Bayard, *our* knight, without fear, and without reproach, is fated in the person of his famous pastoral, at least to be "lightlied" (if I may borrow a word from a fine old ballad) by those most bound to do him honour. It cannot be much less than fifty years ago that I heard the following terrible anecdote told quite innocently, without any perception of the reproach that it involved.

A governess at Wilton House, happening to read

the "Arcadia," had discovered between two of the leaves, folded in paper, as yellow from age as the printed pages between which it reposed, a lock of hair, and on the envelope, enclosing the lock, was written in Sir Philip Sydney's well-known autograph an inscription purporting that the hair was that of her gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth. None of the family had ever heard of the treasure. So this identical volume, not only dedicated to his beloved sister but entitled by himself "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia,"\* had remained for two centuries in the library of her descendants, without any one of them ever taking the trouble to open the book! The governess only—no Sydney, no Herbert—had taste enough or curiosity enough to take down the prose poem. I have not the honour of knowing the present master of Wilton, but judging by reputation I do not think that such a neglect could happen now.

After all, the "Arcadia" is one of those books which may be best appreciated by specimens. This description of scenery for instance :

"There were hills which garnished their proud heights with stately trees ; humble valleys whose base estate seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers ; meadows enamelled with all sorts of eye-pleasing flowers ; thickets which being lined with most pleasant shade were witnessed so to by the cheerful

---

\* Others, too, have loved the "Arcadia," always the delight of poets. Happening to look into that neglected but interesting book, "The life of Hayley," I see that, during a tedious recovery from a severe illness in his childhood, his chief amusement was derived from listening to his mother as she read to him this famous Pastoral.

disposition of many well-tuned birds; each pasture stored with sheep feeding with sober security; while the pretty lambs with bleating oratory, craved the dam's comfort; here a shepherd's boy piping as though he should never be old; there a young shepherdess knitting and withal singing, and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice-music."

The account of a stag-hunt is even more characteristic. It abounds in the faults as well as the beauties of the author.

"Then went they together abroad, the good Kalandar entertaining them with pleasant discoursing—how well he loved the sport of hunting when he was a young man, how much in the comparison thereof he disdained all chamber delights, that the sun (how great a journey soever he had to make) could never prevent him with earliness, nor the moon with her sober countenance dissuade him from watching till midnight for the deer's feeding. O, said he, you will never live to my age without you keep yourself in breath with exercise and in heart with joyfulness; too much thinking doth consume the spirits; and oft it falls out, that, while one thinks too much of his doing, he leaves to do the effect of his thinking. Then, spared he not to remember how much Arcadia was changed since his youth; activity and good fellowship being nothing in the price it was then held in; but, according to the nature of the old-growing world, still worse and worse. Then would he tell them stories of such gallantry as he had known; and so with pleasant company beguiled the time's haste, and shortened the way's length, till they came to the side of the wood,

where the hounds were in couples staying their coming but with a whining accent craving liberty ; many of them in colour and marks so resembling that it showed they were of one kind. . The huntsmen handsomely attired in their green liveries, as though they were children of summer, with staves in their hands, to beat the guiltless earth when the hounds were at a fault ; and with horns about their necks to sound an alarm upon a silly fugitive ; the hounds were straight uncoupled, and ere long the stag thought it better to trust to the nimbleness of his feet than to the slender fortification of his lodging ; but even his feet betrayed him, for howsoever they went, they themselves uttered themselves to the scent of their enemies, who, one taking it of another, and sometimes believing the wind's advertisements, sometimes the view of their faithful counsellors, the huntsmen, with open mouths then denounced war, when the war was already begun. Their cry being composed of so well-sorted mouths, that any man would perceive therein some kind of proportion, but the skilful woodmen did find a music. Then delight and variety of opinion drew the horsemen sundry ways, yet cheering their hounds with voice and horn, kept still as it were together. The wood seemed to conspire with them against his own citizens, dispersing their noise through all his quarters ; and even the nymph Echo left to bewail the loss of Narcissus, and became a hunter. But the stag was in the end so hotly pursued, that leaving his flight, he was driven to make courage of despair ; and so, turning his head, made the hounds with change of speech to testify that he was at a bay ; as if from hot pursuit of their enemy they were suddenly come to a parley."

So far, Sir Philip. Here is another bit of pastoral scenery from the hand of that gentle brother of the angle, Master Izaak Walton, whose portrait of a country milkmaid may vie with "the shepherd's boy piping as though he should never grow old," of the "Arcadia." Piscator and his scholar, Venator, are returning to their inn, after a day's angling. Venator says :

*Ven.* A match, good master : let's go to that house, for the linen looks white, and smells of lavender. Let's be going, good master, for I am hungry again with fishing.

*Pisc.* Nay, stay a little, good scholar. I caught my last trout with a worm, now I will put on a minnow, and try a quarter of an hour about yonder trees for another, and so walk towards our lodging. Look you, scholar, thereabouts we shall have a bite presently or not at all. Have with you, Sir ! O' my word I have hold of him. Oh it is a great lubber-headed chubb ; come, hang him upon that willow twig, and let us be going. But turn out of the way a little, good scholar, towards yonder high honey-suckle hedge ; there we'll sit and sing, whilst this shower falls so gently upon the teeming earth, and gives yet a sweeter smell to the lovely flowers that adorn these verdant meadows.

Look, under that broad beech-tree, I sate down when I was last here a fishing, and the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill : there I sate viewing the silver streams glide silently towards their centre, the tempestuous sea, yet

sometimes opposed by ragged roots and pebble-stones, which broke their waves, and turned them into foam: and sometimes I beguiled time by viewing the harmless lambs, some leaping securely in the cool shade, whilst others sported themselves in the cheerful sun, and saw others craving comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams. As I thus sat, these and other sights had so fully possessed my soul with content, that I thought, as the poet has happily expressed it,

“I was for that time lifted above earth,  
And possessed joys not promised at my birth.”

As I left this place, and entered the next field, a second pleasure entertained me. It was a handsome milkmaid, that had not yet attained so much age and wisdom as to load her mind with any fears of many things that will never be, as too many men too often do; but she cast away all care, and sang like a nightingale: her voice was good, and the ditty fitted for it. It was that smooth song, which was made by Kit Marlowe, now at least fifty years ago; and the milkmaid's mother sung, an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in my younger days.

They were old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good, I think much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion in this critical age. Look yonder! On my word, yonder they both be a milking again. I will give her the chubb, and persuade them to sing those two songs to us.

God speed you, good woman! I have been a fishing, and am going to Bleak Hall to my bed, and having caught more fish than will sup myself and



my friend, I will bestow this upon you and your daughter, for I use to sell none.

*Milk-woman.* Marry, God requite you, Sir, and we'll eat it cheerfully ; and if you come this way a fishing two months hence, a grace of God I'll give you a syllabub of new verjuice in a new-made haycock for it ; and my Maudlin shall sing you one of her best ballads, for she and I both love all anglers, they be such honest, civil, quiet men ; in the meantime, will you drink a draught of red cow's milk ? You shall have it freely !

*Pisc.* No, I thank you ; but I pray you do us a courtesy that shall stand you and your daughter in nothing, and yet we will think ourselves still something in your debt. It is but to sing us a song that was sung by your daughter when I last passed over this meadow, eight or nine days since.

*Milk-woman.* What song was it, I pray ? Was it " Come shepherds deck your herds ? " or " As at noon Dulcina rested ? " or " Phillida flouts me ? " or " Chevy Chase ? " or " Johnny Armstrong ? " or " Troy Town ? "

*Pisc.* No, it is none of those. It is a song that your daughter sang the first part and you sang the answer to it.

*Milk-woman.* O, I know it now. I learned the first part in my golden age, when I was about the age of my poor daughter ; and the latter part, which indeed fits me best now, but two or three years ago, when the cares of the world began to take hold of me. But you shall, God willing, hear them both and sung as well as we can, for we both love anglers. Come, Maudlin, sing the first part to the gentlemen

with a merry heart, and I'll sing the second when you have done.

THE MILKMAID'S SONG.

Come live with me and be my love,  
And we will all the pleasures prove  
That valleys, groves, or hills, or field,  
Or woods and steepy mountains yield.

Where we will sit upon the rocks  
And see the shepherds feed our flocks  
By shallow rivers, to whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,  
And then a thousand fragrant posies,  
A cap of flowers and a kirtle  
Embroidered o'er with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool  
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,  
Slippers lined choicely for the cold,  
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds,  
With coral clasps and amber studs;  
And if these pleasures may thee move,  
Come live with me and be my love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat,  
As precious as the gods do eat,  
Shall on an ivory table be  
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd-swains shall dance and sing  
For thy delight each May-morning:  
If these delights thy mind may move,  
Then live with me and be my love.

*Ven.* Trust me, master, it is a choice song and sweetly sung by honest Maudlin. I now see it was not without cause that our good Queen Elizabeth did

so often wish herself a milkmaid all the month of May, because they are not troubled with fears and cares, but sing sweetly all the day and sleep securely all the night, and without doubt honest, innocent, pretty Maudlin does so. I'll bestow Sir Thomas Overbury's milkmaid's wish upon her, "That she may die in the spring, and being dead may have good store of flowers stuck round about her winding-sheet."

## THE MILKMAID'S MOTHER'S ANSWER.

If all the world and love were young,  
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,  
These pretty pleasures might me move  
To live with thee and be thy love.

But time drives flocks from field to fold,  
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold ;  
Then Philomel becometh dumb,  
And age complains of care to come.

The flowers do fade and wanton fields  
To wayward Winter reckoning yields ;  
A honey tongue, a heart of gall  
Is fancy's Spring but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,  
Thy cap, thy kirtle and thy posies  
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,  
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy buds,  
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,  
All these in me no means can move  
To come to thee and be thy love.

What should we talk of dainties then,  
Of better meat than's fit for men ?  
These are but vain ; that's only good  
Which God hath blest and sent for food.

But could youth last and love still breed,  
Had joys no date, nor age no need,  
Then these delights my mind might move  
To live with thee and be thy love.

*Mother.* Well, I have done my song.

And a delicious song it is. Certainly it was not amongst the least of the many excellencies of Izaak Walton's charming book, that he helped to render popular so many pure and beautiful lyrics. Marlowe's poem, indeed, could never die, for it had been quoted by Shakespeare ; but Sir Walter Raleigh's reply is still finer.

We wonder in reading the milkwoman's list of songs and ballads, which looks like a table of contents to one of the books into which Bishop Percy divided his volumes, whether the country lasses of those days, southern lasses too, for the colloquy passes upon the banks of the Lea, did actually sing border war-songs like "Chevy Chase," or classical legends like "Troy Town." I fear me that their more lettered successors would select very inferior specimens of lyrical composition.

I must add one more extract if only for the sake of "holy Mr. Herbert's" four stanzas.

"And now, scholar, my direction for fly-fishing is ended with this shower, for it has done raining : and now look about you and see how pleasantly that meadow looks ; nay, and the earth smells as sweetly too. Come, let me tell you what holy Mr. Herbert says of such days and flowers as these ; and then we will thank God that we enjoy them, and walk to the river and sit down quietly and try to catch the other brace of trouts :—

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,  
The bridal of the earth and sky ;  
Sweet dews shall weep thy fall to-night—  
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,  
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye ;  
Thy root is ever in the grave—  
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,  
A box where sweets compacted lie ;  
My music shows you have your closes—  
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,  
Like seasoned timber never gives ;  
But when the whole world turns to coal—  
Then chiefly lives."

Besides "The Complete Angler," Izaak Walton has left us a volume containing four or five lives of eminent men quite as fine as that great Pastoral, although in a very different way. His life of Dr. Donne, the satirist and theologian, contains an account of a vision (the apparition of a beloved wife in England passing before the waking eyes of her husband in Paris), which, both for the clearness of the narration and the undoubted authenticity of the event, is amongst the most interesting that is to be found in his long catalogue of supernatural visitations.

## XVI.

## SPANISH BALLADS.

EVERY one of any imagination, every one at all addicted to that grand art of dreaming with the eyes open, and building what are called castles in the air, has, I suppose, his own peculiar realm of dreamland, his own chosen country, his own favourite period ; and from my earliest hour of fanciful idleness, down to this present moment, Spain, as it existed when the Moors ruled over the fairest part of that fair country, has been mine. It is probable that I am not singular in my choice. Our vivacious neighbours, the Gauls, when they call their air-castles *châteaux en Espagne*, give some token of their preference for that romantic locality, and the finest creations of Italian poetry, although tolerably anomalous as to place and time, may yet as a whole be referred to the same period and the same country.

My fancy for the Moors, however, long preceded my acquaintance with Ariosto. What gave rise to it I cannot tell. Who can analyze or put a date to anything so impalpable ! as well try to grasp a rainbow. Perhaps it arose from the melodious stanzas of "Almanzor and Zayda," the favourite of my childhood ; perhaps from the ballads in "Don Quixote," or from Don Quixote himself, the darling of my youth ; perhaps from an old folio translation of Mariana's history,

a book which I devoured at fifteen as girls of fifteen read romances, finding the truth, if truth it were, fully as amusing as fiction ; perhaps from the countless English comedies founded on Spanish subjects ; perhaps from Corneille's *Cid* ; perhaps from Le Sage's *Gil Blas* ; perhaps from Mozart's *Don Juan* ! Who can tell from what plant came the seed, or what wind wafted it ? Certain it is that at eighteen the fancy was full blown, and that ever since it has been fed by countless hands and nurtured by innumerable streams. Lord Holland's charming book on Lope de Vega, Murphy's magnificent work on Granada, Mr. Prescott's *Spanish Histories*, Washington Irving's graphic *Chronicles*, a host of French and English travellers in Spain, a host of Spanish travellers in South America, the popular works of Ford and Borrow, of Dumas and Scribe, Southey's poetry, Sir Walter's prose—all conspired to keep alive the fancy.

But beyond a doubt, the works that have most fed the flame, have been Mr. Lockhart's spirited volume of Spanish ballads, to which the art of the modern translator has given the charm of the vigorous old poets ; and Mr. Ticknor's "*History of Spanish Literature*," that rarest of all works in these days, when literature, like everything else, goes at railway speed, a conscientious book, which being the labour of a lifetime, will remain a standard authority for many generations.

In one of his recently-published letters, Southey, himself a powerful though somewhat fantastic ballad writer, denies all merit to the Spanish ballads, accusing them of sameness, of want of action and of want of interest. To this there needs but Mr. Lockhart's book to reply ; even if the transmittal of so long a

series of poems floating upon the memories, and living in the hearts of a whole people were not answer enough: even if the very materials and accessories of these ballads were not sufficient, the felicity of climate, the mixture of race; of Moor and Christian; of veiled beauty and armed knight; of fountained garden and pillared court; of gigantic cathedral and fantastic mosque; of mountains crowned with chestnut and cork-tree, and clothed with cistus and lavender; of streams winding through tufted oleanders, amid vineyards, orange-groves and olive-grounds: of the rich halls of the Alhambra; of the lordly towers of Seville; of shrine and abbey; of pilgrim and procession; of bull-fight and tournament; of love and of battle; of princely paladins and learned caliphs, and still more learned Jews! Why this is the very stuff of which poetry is made, and strange indeed it would have been, if born amongst such beauty, and happy in a language at once stately, flowing and harmonious, the great old minstrels, who, like their compeers of the Middle Ages, the equally great old architects, have bequeathed to us their works and not their names, had failed to find it.

The first specimen that I shall select is the ballad which Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, when at Toboso, overheard a peasant singing as he was going to his work at day-break.

#### THE ADMIRAL GUARINOS.

The day of Roncesvalles was a dismal day for you,  
Ye men of France, for there the lance of King Charles was broke  
in two.  
Ye well may curse that rueful field, for many a noble peer  
In fray or fight the dust did bite beneath Bernardo's spear.



Then captured was Guarinos, King Charles's Admiral,  
Seven Moorish kings surrounded him, and seized him for their  
thrall ;  
Seven times when all their chase was o'er, for Guarinos lots  
they cast ;  
Seven time Marlotes won the throw, and the knight was his at  
last.

Much joy had then Marlotes, and his captive much did  
prize,  
Above all the wealth of Araby, he was precious in his eyes.  
Within his tent at evening he made the best of cheer,  
And thus, the banquet done, he spake unto his prisoner.

" Now, for the sake of Allah, Lord Admiral Guarinos,  
Be thou a Moslem, and much love shall ever rest between us.  
Two daughters have I !—all the day shall one thy handmaid  
be—  
The other (and the fairest far) by night shall cherish thee.

" The one shall be thy waiting-maid, thy weary feet to lave,  
To scatter perfumes on thy head, and fetch thee garments  
brave :  
The other—she the pretty one—shall deck her bridal bower,  
And my field and my city they both shall be her dower.

" If more thou wishest, more I'll give. Speak boldly what thy  
thought is."  
Thus earnestly and kindly to Guarinos said Marlotes :  
But not a minute did he take to ponder or to pause,  
Thus clear and quick the answer of the Christian Captain was.

" Now, God forbid ! Marlotes, and Mary his dear mother,  
That I should leave the faith of Christ and bind me to  
another.  
For women—I've one wife in France, and I'll wed no more in  
Spain,  
I change not faith, I break not vow, for courtesy or gain."

Wroth waxed King Marlotes, when thus he heard him say,  
And all for ire commanded, he should be led away ;  
Away unto the dungeon-keep, beneath his vaults to lie,  
With fetters bound in darkness deep, far off from sun and  
sky.

With iron bands they bound his hands ; that sore unworthy  
plight  
Might well express his helplessness, doomed never more to  
fight.  
Again, from cincture down to knee, long bolts of iron he  
bore,  
Which signified the knight should ride on charger never  
more.

Three times alone in all the year it is the captive's doom  
To see God's daylight bright and clear, instead of dungeon-  
gloom ;  
Three times alone they bring him out, like Samson long ago,  
Before the Moorish rabble-rout to be a sport and show.

On these high feasts they bring him forth, a spectacle to be—  
The Feast of Pasque and the great day of the Nativity ;  
And on that morn, more solemn yet, when maidens strip the  
bowers,  
And gladden mosque and minaret with the first fruits of the  
flowers.

Days come and go of gloom and show. Seven years are past  
and gone.  
And now doth fall the festival of the Holy Baptist John ;  
Christian and Moslem tilts and jousts, to give it honour due,  
And rushes on the path to spread, they force the sulky Jew.

Marlotes in his joy and pride a target high doth rear,  
Below the Moorish knights must ride and pierce it with the  
spear ;  
But 'tis so high up in the sky, albeit much they strain.  
No Moorish lance may fly so far, Marlotes' prize to gain.

Wroth waxed King Marlot's, when he beheld them fail,  
The whisker trembled on his lip, and his cheek for ire was pale.  
The herald's proclamation made, with trumpets, through the town,

"Nor child shall suck, nor man shall eat, till the mark be  
tumbled down!"

The cry of proclamation and the trumpet's haughty sound  
Did send an echo to the vault where the Admiral was bound.  
"Now help me, God!" the captive cries. "What means this  
cry so loud?"

O, Queen of Heaven! be vengeance given on these thy haters  
proud!

"Oh! is it that some Paynim gay doth Marlot's daughter wed,  
And that they bear my scorn'd fair in triumph to his bed?  
Or is it that the day is come—one of the hateful three—  
When they, with trumpet, fife, and drum, make heathen game of  
me?"

These words the jailer chanced to hear, and thus to him he  
said:

"These tabours, lord, and trumpets clear conduct no bride to  
bed,  
Nor hath the feast come round again, when he that hath the  
right  
Commands thee forth, thou foe of Spain, to glad the people's  
sight.

"This is the joyful morning of John the Baptist's day,  
When Moor and Christian feast at home, each in his nation's  
way;  
But now our king commands that none his banquet shall begin,  
Until some knight, by strength or sleight, the spearman's prize  
do win."

Then out and spoke Guarinos: "Oh! soon each man should  
feed,  
Were I but mounted once again on my own gallant steed.  
Oh, were I mounted as of old, and harnessed cap-a-pie,  
Full soon Marlot's prize I'd hold whate'er its price may be.

“ Give me my horse, my old grey horse, so be he is not dead,  
All gallantly caparisoned with plate on breast and head ;  
And give me the lance I brought from France, and if I win it  
not  
My life shall be the forfeiture, I'll yield it on the spot.”

The jailer wondered at his words. Thus to the knight said he :  
“ Seven weary years of chains and gloom have little humbled  
thee.

There's never a man in Spain I trow, the like so well might bear,  
An' if thou wilt I with thy vow will to the King repair.”

The jailer put his mantle on and came unto the King,  
He found him sitting on the throne within his listed ring ;  
Close to his ear he planted him, and the story did begin,  
How bold Guarinos vaunted him the spearman's prize to win.

That were he mounted but once more on his own gallant  
grey  
And armed with the lance he bore on the Roncesvalles day,  
What never Moorish knight could pierce, he would pierce it at  
a blow,  
Or give with joy his life-blood fierce at Marlotes' feet to flow.

Much marvelling, then said the King : “ Bring Sir Guarinos  
forth,  
And in the grange go seek ye for his grey steed of worth :  
His arms are rusty on the wall, seven years have gone, I judge,  
Since that strong horse hath bent him to be a common drudge.

“ Now this will be a sight indeed to see the enfeebled lord  
Essay to mount that ragged steed, and draw that rusty sword ;  
And for the vaunting of his praise he well deserves to die :  
So jailer gird his harness on, and bring your champion nigh.”

They have girded on his shirt of mail, his cuisses well they've  
clasped,  
And they've barred the helm on his visage pale, and his hand  
the lance hath grasped ;  
And they have caught the old grey horse, the horse he loved of  
yore,  
And he stands pawing at the gate caparisoned once more.

When the knight came out the Moors did shout, and loudly  
 laughed the King,  
 For the horse he pranced and capered and furiously did fling ;  
 But Guarinos whispered in his ear, and looked into his face,  
 Then stood the old charger, like a lamb, with calm and gentle  
 grace.

Oh ! lightly did Guarinos vault into the saddle-tree,  
 And slowly riding down made halt before Marlot's knee ;  
 Again the heathen laughed aloud. " All hail, Sir Knight !"  
 quoth he,  
 " Now do thy best, thou champion proud ; thy blood I look to  
 see."

With that Guarinos, lance in rest, against the scoffer rode,  
 Pierced at one thrust his envious breast, and down his turban  
 trode.  
 Now ride, now ride, Guarinos ! nor lance nor rowel spare,  
 Slay, slay, and gallop for thy life ! The land of France lies *there* !

The " old gray steed " plays no mean part in the  
 foregoing story ; and of the many ballads that  
 celebrate the glories of the Cid, I hardly know one  
 more pleasing than that which describes the mingled  
 spirit and gentleness of his favourite horse.

#### BAVIECA.

The King looked on him kindly, as on a vassal true ;  
 Then to the King Ruy Dias spake, after reverence due :  
 " O King, the thing is shameful, that any man beside  
 The liege lord of Castile himself should Bavioca ride ;

" For neither Spain nor Araby could another charger bring  
 So good as he, and certes the best befits my King.  
 But that you may behold him and know him to the core,  
 I'll make him go as he was wont, when his nostrils smelt the  
 Moor."

With that the Cid, clad as he was in mantle furred and wide,  
On Bavioca vaulting, put the rowel in his side :  
And up and down, and round and round so fierce was his career,  
Streamed like a pennon on the wind, Ruy Dias' minivere.

And all that saw them praised them ; they lauded man and  
horse,  
As matched well, and rivalless for gallantry and force ;  
Ne'er had they looked on horseman might to this knight come  
near,  
Nor on other charger worthy of such a cavalier.

Thus to and fro a-rushing, the fierce and furious steed  
He snapt in twain his hither rein :—"God pity now the Cid !  
God pity Dias !" said the lords ; but when they looked again  
They saw Ruy Dias ruling him with the fragment of his rein ;  
They saw him firmly ruling, with gesture firm and calm,  
Like a true lord commanding—and obeyed as by a lamb.

And so he led him prancing and panting to the King ;  
But "No !" said Don Alphonso, "it were a shameful thing  
That peerless Bavioca should ever be bestrid  
By any mortal but Bivar : Mount, mount again, my Cid !"

In these two ballads there is little mention of the ladies. But two of the most charming of the Moorish series are devoted to them exclusively. "The following," says Mr. Lockhart, "has been often imitated in Spain and in Germany." Its elegance could scarcely be increased in any language :

#### THE BRIDAL OF ANDALLA.

"Rise up, rise up, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down ;  
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town.  
From gay guitar and violin the silver notes are flowing,  
And the lovely lute doth speak between the trumpets lordly  
blowing ;

And banners bright from lattice light are waving everywhere,  
And the tall, tall plume of our cousin's bridegroom floats proudly  
in the air.

Rise up, rise up, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down ;  
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town.

Arise, arise, Xarifa ; I see Andalla's face ;  
He bends him to the people with a calm and princely grace ;  
Through all the land of Xeres, and banks of Guadalquivir,  
Rode forth bridegroom so brave as he, so brave and lovely  
never.

Yon tall plume waving o'er his brow, of azure mixed with  
white,

I guess 'twas wreathed by Zara, whom he will wed to-night.

Rise up, rise up, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down ;  
Rise up, come to the window, and gaze with all the town.

"What aileth thee, Xarifa? what makes thine eyes look  
down?

Why stay ye from the window far, nor gaze with all the  
town?

I've heard you say on many a day, and sure you said the  
truth,

Andalla rides without a peer among all Granada's youth ;  
Without a peer he rideth, and yon milk-white horse doth go  
Beneath his stately master, with a stately step and slow.

Then rise, oh rise, Xarifa, lay the golden cushion down ;  
Unseen here, through the lattice, you may gaze with all the  
town."

The Zegri lady rose not, nor laid her cushion down ;

Nor came she to the window, to gaze with all the town ;

But though her eyes dwelt on her knee, in vain her fingers  
strove,

And though her needle prest the silk, no flower Xarifa wove.

One bonny rose-bud she had traced before the noise drew nigh ;

That bonny bud a tear effaced, slow dropping from her eye.

"No, no," she sighs, "bid me not rise, nor lay my cushion  
down,

To gaze upon Andalla with all the gazing town."

"Why rise ye not, Xarifa, nor lay your cushion down?  
 Why gaze ye not, Xarifa, with all the gazing town?  
 Hear, hear the trumpet how it swells! and how the people  
 cry!

He stops at Zara's palace-gate. Why sit ye still? Oh, why?"  
 —"At Zara's gate stops Zara's mate; in him shall I discover  
 The dark-eyed youth pledged me his truth with tears, and was  
 my lover?

I will not rise with weary eyes, nor lay my cushion do n,  
 To gaze on false Andalla with all the gazing town."

The next, still of a Moorish maiden, is even more  
 charming :

#### ZARA'S EAR-RINGS.

"My ear-rings! my ear-rings! they've dropt into the well,  
 And what to say to Muça, I cannot, cannot tell."

'Twas thus, Granada's fountain by, spoke Albuarez' daughter.

"The well is deep; far down they lie, beneath the cold blue  
 water.

To me did Muça give them, when he spake his sad farewell;  
 And what to say, when he comes back, alas! I cannot tell.

"My ear-rings! my ear-rings! they were pearls in silver set,  
 That when my Moor was far away, I ne'er should him forget;  
 That I ne'er to other tongue should list, nor smile on other's  
 tale,

But remember he my lips had kissed, pure as those ear-rings  
 pale.

When he comes back, and hears that I have dropped them in the  
 well,

Oh! what will Muça think of me, I cannot, cannot tell!

"My ear-rings! my ear-rings! he'll say they should have been  
 Not of pearl and of silver, but of gold and glittering sheen,  
 Of jasper and of onyx, and of diamond shining clear,  
 Changing to the changing light, with radiance insincere;  
 That changeful mind unchangeable gems are not befitting well:  
 Thus will he think :—and what to say, alas! I cannot tell!



"He'll think, when I to market went, I loitered by the way ;  
 He'll think a willing ear I lent to all the lads might say ;  
 He'll think some other lover's hand, among my tresses noosed  
 From the ears where he had placed them my rings of pearl  
 unloosed.

He'll think, when I was sporting so beside this marble well,  
 My pearls fell in :—and what to say, alas ! I cannot tell.

"He'll say I am a woman, and we are all the same ;  
 He'll say I loved, when he was here, to whisper of his flame ;  
 But when he went to Tunis, my virgin troth had broken,  
 And thought no more of Muça, and cared not for his token.  
 My ear-rings ! my ear-rings ! Oh ! luckless, luckless well !  
 For what to say to Muça, alas ! I cannot tell !

"I'll tell the truth to Muça, and I hope he will believe  
 That I thought of him at morning, and thought of him at eve ;  
 That musing on my lover, when down the sun was gone,  
 His ear-rings in my hand I held, by the fountain all alone ;  
 And that my mind was o'er the sea, when from my hand they  
 fell,  
 And that deep his love lies in my heart, as they lie in the  
 well !"

These ballads are all from Mr. Lockhart's delightful book. I add one or two extracts from the probably more literal version of Mr. Ticknor ; the first is the "Lament of the Count de Saldaña," who, in his solitary prison, complains of his son, who he supposes must know his descent, and of his wife, the Infanta, whom he presumes to be in league with her royal brother. After a description of the castle in which he is confined, the Count says :

The tale of my imprisoned life  
 Within these loathsome walls,  
 Each moment as it lingers by  
 My hoary hair recalls ;

For when this castle first I saw,  
 My beard was scarcely grown,  
 And now, to purge my youthful sins,  
 Its folds hang whitening down.  
 Then where art thou, my careless son ?  
 And why so dull and cold ?  
 Doth not my blood within thee run ?  
 Speaks it not loud and bold ?  
 Alas ! it may be so, but still  
 Thy mother's blood is thine ;  
 And what is kindred to the King  
 Will plead no cause of mine :  
 And thus all three against me stand ;—  
 For, the whole men to quell,  
 'Tis not enough to have our foes,  
 Our heart's blood must rebel.  
 Meanwhile, the guards that watch me here,  
 Of thy proud conquests boast ;  
 But if for me thou lead'st it not,  
 For whom then fights thy host ?  
 And since thou leav'st me prisoned here,  
 In cruel chains to groan,  
 Or I must be a guilty sire,  
 Or thou a guilty son !  
 Yet pardon me, if I offend  
 By uttering words so free,  
 For, while oppressed with age I moan,  
 No words come back from thee.

Some of these old songs are sufficiently shrewd and humorous ; witness the following, “ in which an elder sister is represented lecturing a younger one on first noticing in her the symptoms of love : ”

Her sister Miguela  
 Once chid little Jane,  
 And the words that she spake  
 Gave a great deal of pain.

- "You went yesterday playing  
A child like the rest ;  
And now you come out,  
More than other girls drest.
- "You take pleasure in sighs,  
In sad music delight ;  
With the dawning you rise,  
Yet sit up half the night.
- "When you take up your work,  
You look vacant, and stare ;  
And gaze on your sampler,  
Yet miss the stitch there.
- "You're in love, people say,  
And your actions all show it ;  
New ways we shall have,  
When our mother shall know it.
- "She'll nail up the windows,  
And lock up the door ;  
Leave to frolic and dance  
She will give us no more.
- "Our old aunt will be sent for,  
To take us to mass ;  
And to stop all our talk  
With the girls as we pass.
- "And when we walk out,  
She will bid that old shrew  
Keep a faithful account  
Of what'er our eyes do ;
- "And mark who goes by,  
If I peep through the blind ;  
And be sure to detect us  
In looking behind.
- "Thus, for your idle follies,  
Must I suffer too ;  
And though nothing I've done,  
Must be punished like you."

"Oh! sister Miguela  
Your chiding pray spare!  
That I've troubles you guess,  
But know not what they are.

"Young Pedro it is,  
Old Don Ivor's fair youth;—  
But he's gone to the wars,  
And, Oh! where is his truth?

"I loved him sincerely,  
Loved all that he said;  
But I fear he is fickle,  
I fear he has fled.

"He is gone of free choice,  
Without summons or call;  
And 'tis foolish to love him,  
Or like him at all."

"Nay, pray morn and night  
To the Virgin above,  
Lest this Pedro return,  
And again you should love,"

(Said Miguela in jest,  
As she answered poor Jane);  
"For, when love has been bought  
At the cost of such pain,

"What hope is there, sister,  
Unless the soul part,  
That the passion so cherished  
Should leave your fond heart?

"As your years still increase,  
So increase will your pains;  
And this you may learn  
From the proverb's old strains;

"That if, when but a child,  
Love's dominion you own,  
None can tell what you'll do,  
When you older are grown."

This dialogue is three hundred years old at the very least. I do not think it would be quite impossible to match it now, with a little change of names and of costume. Perhaps I may have myself altered some of the lines, since I quote from memory, and have not the book to refer to.

It is not the least gratifying tribute to Mr. Ticknor's valuable work that it was recommended for perusal by Mr. Macaulay to the Queen of England.

## XVII.

## FEMALE POETS.

## ADVENTURE AT WILLIAM COBBETT'S.

## MISS BLAMIRE—MRS. JAMES GRAY.

THE name of Blamire has always a certain interest for me, in consequence of a circumstance, which, as it took place somewhere about five-and-forty years ago, and has reference to a flirtation of twenty years previous, there cannot now be much harm in relating.

Being with my father and mother on a visit about six miles from Southampton, we were invited by a gentleman of the neighbourhood to meet the wife and daughters of a certain Dr. Blamire. "An old friend of yours and mine," quoth our inviter to my father. "Don't you remember how you used to flirt with the fair lady when you and Babington were at Haslar? Faith, if Blamire had not taken pity on her, it would have gone hard with the poor damsel! However, he made up to the disconsolate maiden, and she got over it. Nothing like a new love for chasing away an old one. You must dine with us to-morrow. I shall like to see the meeting."

My father did not attempt to deny the matter. Men never do. He laughed, as all that wicked sex do laugh at such sins twenty years after, and pro-

fessed that he should be very glad to shake hands with his old acquaintance. So the next day we met.

I was a little curious to see how my own dear mother, my mamma that was, and the stranger lady, my mamma that might have been, would bear themselves on the occasion. At first, my dear mother, an exceedingly lady-like quiet person, had considerably the advantage, being prepared for the *rencontre* and perfectly calm and composed; whilst Mrs. Blamire, taken, I suspect, by surprise, was a good deal startled and flustered. This state of things, however, did not last. Mrs. Blamire having got over the first shock, comported herself like what she evidently was, a practised woman of the world—would talk to no one but ourselves—and seemed resolved not only to make friends with her successful rival, but to strike up an intimacy. This, by no means, entered into my mother's calculations. As the one advanced the other receded, and, keeping always within the limits of civility, I never heard so much easy chat put aside with so many cool and stately monosyllables in my life.

The most diverting part of this scene, very amusing to a stander-by, was, that my father, the only real culprit, was the only person who throughout maintained the appearance and demeanour of the most unconscious innocence. He complimented Mrs. Blamire on her daughters (two very fine girls),—inquired after his old friend, the Doctor, who was attending his patients in a distant town—and laughed and talked over bygone stories with the one lady, just as if he had not jilted her—and played the kind and attentive husband to the other, just as if he had

never in all his days made love to anybody except his own dear wife.

It was one of the strange domestic comedies which are happening around us every day, if we were but aware of them, and might probably have ended in a renewal of acquaintance between the two families, but for a dispute that occurred towards the end of the evening between Mrs. Blamire and the friend in whose house we were staying, which made the lady resolve against accepting his hospitable invitation, and I half suspect hurried her off a day or two before her time.

This host of ours was a very celebrated person,—no other than William Cobbett. Sporting, not politics, had brought about our present visit and subsequent intimacy. We had become acquainted with Mr. Cobbett two or three years before, at this very house, where we were now dining to meet Mrs. Blamire. Then my father, a great sportsman, had met him while on a coursing expedition near Alton—had given him a greyhound that he had fallen in love with—had invited him to attend another coursing meeting near our own house in Berkshire—and finally, we were now, in the early autumn, with all manner of pointers, and setters, and greyhounds, and spaniels, shooting ponies, and gun-cases, paying the return visit to him.

He had at that time a large house at Botley, with a lawn and gardens sweeping down to the Bursledon River, which divided his (Mr. Cobbett's) territories from the beautiful grounds of the old friend where we had been originally staying, the great squire of the place. His own house—large, high, massive, red, and



square, and perched on a considerable eminence—always struck me as being not unlike its proprietor. It was filled at that time almost to overflowing. Lord Cochrane was there, then in the very height of his warlike fame, and as unlike the common notion of a warrior as could be. A gentle, quiet, mild young man, was this burner of French fleets and cutter-out of Spanish vessels, as one should see in a summer-day. He lay about under the trees reading Selden on the Dominion of the Seas, and letting the children (and children always know with whom they may take liberties) play all sorts of tricks with him at their pleasure. His ship's surgeon was also a visitor, and a young midshipman, and sometimes an elderly lieutenant, and a Newfoundland dog; fine sailor-like creatures all. Then there was a very learned clergyman, a great friend of Mr. Gifford, of the "Quarterly," with his wife and daughter—exceedingly clever persons. Two literary gentlemen from London and ourselves completed the actual party; but there was a large fluctuating series of guests for the hour or guests for the day, of almost all ranks and descriptions, from the Earl and his Countess to the farmer and his dame. The house had room for all, and the hearts of the owners would have had room for three times the number.

I never saw hospitality more genuine, more simple, or more thoroughly successful in the great end of hospitality, the putting everybody completely at ease. There was not the slightest attempt at finery, or display, or gentility. They called it a farm-house, and everything was in accordance with the largest idea of a great English yeoman of the old time. Everything

was excellent—everything abundant—all served with the greatest nicety by trim waiting-damsels; and everything went on with such quiet regularity, that of the large circle of guests not one could find himself in the way. I need not say a word more in praise of the good wife, very lately dead, to whom this admirable order was mainly due. She was a sweet motherly woman, realising our notion of one of Scott's most charming characters, *Ailie Dinmont*, in her simplicity, her kindness, and her devotion to her husband and her children.

At this time William Cobbett was at the height of his political reputation; but of politics we heard little, and should, I think, have heard nothing, but for an occasional red-hot patriot, who would introduce the subject, which our host would fain put aside, and get rid of as speedily as possible. There was something of *Dandie Dinmont* about him, with his unfailing good humour and good spirits—his heartiness—his love of field sports—and his liking for a foray. He was a tall, stout man, fair, and sunburnt, with a bright smile, and an air compounded of the soldier and the farmer, to which his habit of wearing an eternal red waistcoat contributed not a little. He was, I think, the most athletic and vigorous person that I have ever known. Nothing could tire him. At home in the morning he would begin his active day by mowing his own lawn, beating his gardener Robinson, the best mower, except himself, in the parish, at that fatiguing work.

For early rising, indeed, he had an absolute passion, and some of the poetry that we trace in his writings, whenever he speaks of scenery or of rural objects,

broke out in his method of training his children into his own matutinal habits. The boy who was first down stairs was called the Lark for the day, and had, amongst other indulgences, the pretty privilege of making his mother's nosegay and that of any lady visitors. Nor was this the only trace of poetical feeling that he displayed. Whenever he described a place, were it only to say where such a covey lay, or such a hare was found sitting, you could see it, so graphic—so vivid—so true was the picture. He showed the same taste in the purchase of his beautiful farm at Botley, Fairthorn; even in the pretty name. To be sure, he did not give the name, but I always thought that it unconsciously influenced his choice in the purchase. The beauty of the situation certainly did. The fields lay along the Bursledon River, and might have been shown to a foreigner as a specimen of the richest and loveliest English scenery. In the cultivation of his garden too, he displayed the same taste. Few persons excelled him in the management of vegetables, fruit, and flowers. His green Indian corn—his Carolina beans—his water-melons could hardly have been exceeded at New York. His wall-fruit was equally splendid, and much as flowers have been studied since that day, I never saw a more glowing or a more fragrant autumn garden than that at Botley, with its pyramids of hollyhocks, and its masses of china-asters, of cloves, of mignonette, and of variegated geranium. The chances of life soon parted us, as, without grave faults on either side, people do lose sight of one another; but I shall always look back with pleasure and regret to that visit.

While we were there, a grand display of English games, especially of single-stick and wrestling, took place under Mr. Cobbett's auspices. Players came from all parts of the country—the south, the west, and the north—to contend for fame and glory, and also, I believe, for a well-filled purse; and this exhibition which—quite forgetting the precedent set by a certain princess, *de jure*, called Rosalind, and another princess, *de facto*, called Celia—she termed barbarous, was the cause of his quarrel with my mamma that might have been, Mrs. Blamire.

In my life I never saw two people in a greater passion. Each was thoroughly persuaded of being in the right, either would have gone to the stake upon it, and of course the longer they argued, the more determined became their conviction. They said all manner of uncivil things; they called each other very unpretty names; she got very near to saying, "Sir, you're a savage;" he did say, "Ma'am, you're a fine lady;" they talked, both at once, until they could talk no longer, and I have always considered it as one of the greatest pieces of Christian forgiveness that I ever met with when Mr. Cobbett, after they had both rather cooled down a little, invited Mrs. Blamire to dine at his house the next day. She, less charitable, declined the invitation, and we parted. As I have said, my father and he had too much of the hearty English character in common not to be great friends; I myself was somewhat of a favourite (I think because of my love for poetry, though he always said not), and I shall never forget the earnestness with which he congratulated us both on our escape from such a wife and such a mother. "She'd have been

the death of you!" quoth he, and he believed it. Doubtless, she, when we were gone, spoke quite as ill of him, and believed it also. Nevertheless, excellent persons were they both;—only they had quarrelled about the propriety or the impropriety of a bout at single-stick! Such a thing is anger!

Upon comparing names, and dates, and places, it seems probable that the Miss Blamire, whose name figures at the head of this paper, was the aunt of the Dr. Blamire, of whom we have been speaking. She died unmarried at Carlisle, in the year 1794, being then forty-seven years of age, the daughter of a respectable Cumberland gentleman, and having accompanied a married sister into Scotland many years before—a happy circumstance to which she owes her command of the pretty Doric that so becomes small pieces of poetry. Her verses remained uncollected till 1842, when they were published by Mr. Maxwell. They are well worth preserving, especially the one entitled

## THE RETURN.

When silent time wi' lightly foot  
 Had trod on thirty years,  
 I sought again my native land,  
 Wi' mony hopes and fears.  
 Wha kens gin the dear friends I left  
 May still continue mine?  
 Or gin I e'er again shall taste  
 The joys I left langsyne?

As I drew near my ancient pile,  
 My heart beat a' the way;  
 Ilk place I passed seemed yet to speak  
 O' some dear former day.

Those days that followed me afar,  
Those happy days o' mine,  
Whilk made me think the present joys  
A' naething to langsyne.

The ivied tower now met my eye,  
Where minstrels used to blaw ;  
Nae friend stepped forth wi' open hand,  
Nae weel-kenned face I saw ;  
Till Donald tottered to the door,  
Wham I left in his prime,  
And grat to see the lad return  
He bore about langsyne.

I ran to ilka dear friend's room,  
As if to see them there ;  
I knew where ilk ane used to sit,  
And hung o'er mony a chair ;  
Till soft remembrance flung a veil  
Across these een o' mine,  
I closed the door, and sobbed aloud,  
To think on auld langsyne.

Some pensy chiels, a new sprung race,  
Wad next their welcome pay,  
Wha shuddered at my Gothic wa's,  
And wished my groves awa'.  
"Cut, cut," they cried, "yon aged elms,  
Lay low yon mournfu' pine :"  
"Na! na! our fathers' names grow there,  
Memorials o' langsyne."

To wean me fra these mournfu' thoughts,  
They took me to the town :  
But sair on ilka weel-kenned face  
I missed the youthfu' bloom.  
At ba's they pointed to a nymph,  
Whom a' declared divine ;  
But sure her mother's blushing cheeks  
Were fairer far langsyne.

In vain I sought in music's sound  
 To find that magic art,  
 Which aft in Scotland's ancient lays  
 Hae thrilled through a' my heart ;  
 The sang had mony an artfu' turn,  
 My ear confessed 'twas fine,  
 But I missed the simple melody  
 I listened to langsyne.

Ye sons to comrades o' my youth,  
 Forgie an auld man's spleen,  
 Wha midst your gayest scenes still mourns  
 The days he ance has seen.  
 When time has passed, and seasons fled,  
 Your hearts will feel like mine,  
 And aye the song will maist delight  
 That minds ye o' langsyne.

I add an example of a still bolder effort—an attempt to make tender sentiment be felt under the disguise of the rude dialect of Cumberland. Perhaps it may be the effect of Auld Lang Syne on myself, that makes me think it eminently successful :—

## AULD ROBIN FORBES.

And auld Robin Forbes has gi'en tem a dance,  
 I pat on my speckets to see them aw prance ;  
 I thought o' the days when I was but fifteen,  
 And skepped wi' the best upon Forbes's green.  
 Of aw things that is, I think thout is meast queer ;  
 It brings that that's bypast, and sets it down here ;  
 I see Willy as plain as I din his bit leace,  
 When he tuik his cwoat lappet and deeghted his feace.

The lasses aw wondered what Willy cud see  
 In yen that was dark and hard-featured leyke me ;  
 And they wondered ay mair when they talked o' my wit,  
 And silyly telt Willy that cud'nt be it.

But Willy he laughed, and he meade me his weyfe,  
 And wha was mair happy through aw his lang leyfe ?  
 It's e'en my great comfort now Willy is geane,  
 That he often said nae place was leyke his own heame.

I mind when I carried my wark to yon steyle,  
 Where Willy was deyken the time to beguile,  
 He wad fling me a daisy to put in my breast,  
 And I hammered my noddle to make out a jest ;  
 But merry or grave, Willy often wad tell  
 There was nane o' the leave that was like my ain sel' ;  
 And he spak what he thout, for I'd hardly a plack  
 When we married, and nobbet ae gown to my back.

When the clock had struck eight, I expected him heame,  
 And whiles went to meet him as far as Dumleane ;  
 Of aw hours it telt, eight was dearest to me,  
 And now when it strikes, there's a tear i' my e'e.  
 Oh, Willy ! dear Willy ! it never can be,  
 That age, time, or death can divide thee and me !  
 For that spot on earth that's aye dearest to me,  
 Is the turf that has covered my Willy frae me.\*

Mrs. James Gray is better known in England as Mary Anne Browne, and under that name might have furnished the text to another melancholy chapter on Prodigies, a chapter on fine and promising girls who have become martyrs to the fond mistakes of parents, and the careless flatteries of friends, and have lost the happy and healthful thoughtlessness of the child in the premature cares, the untimely aspirations, the fears, anxieties, and disappointments of the poetess. If in my humble career I can look back to any part of my own conduct with real satisfaction, it is that I

---

\* Those who are fond of Scotch music may be glad to be reminded that the simply-pathetic song,

“What ails this heart of mine?”

is also by Miss Susanna Blamire.



have always, when a young lady has been brought to me in her character of prodigy, had the courage to give present pain in order to avert a future evil. I have always said, "Wait;" certain that the more real was the talent, the greater was the danger of over-exciting the youthful faculties, of over-stimulating the youthful sensibility. In Miss Mary Anne Browne's case, no advice was asked. I saw her first a fine tall girl of fourteen, already a full-fledged authoress, unmercifully lauded by some, as if verses, especially love verses, written at that age, could be anything better than clever imitations; and still more cruelly depreciated by others, as if we had a right to expect all the results of long study—of skilful practice—of observation—and of experience from one who was in everything but her quick ear and her fertile fancy still a child.

Thus brought forward, praised to the skies one day, utterly neglected the next—taken, as if a woman, into London society, and then thrown back upon a family circle in a provincial town, her health and spirits suffered; and if she had not been in heart and temper a girl of a thousand, she would have become soured and miserable for life. The real power was in her, however, and the depression was temporary. When taken from the unhealthy atmosphere of the stove, the plant recovered its strength; and blossomed freely in the open air. When no longer stimulated by factitious applause, she wrote verses deserving of sincere admiration and enduring fame.

An accidental visit to Ireland introduced her poems to the Editor of the "Dublin University Magazine," and under his judicious encouragement

she poured forth her various and earnest lays with astonishing fertility and abundance. In Ireland, too, she met the Scottish gentleman, Mr. James Gray, the nephew of the Ettrick Shepherd, whom, after some delay and difficulty, she married.

Her wedded life appears to have been singularly happy—as happy as it was brief. After a short illness she expired, while still in the bloom of womanhood (she had not yet completed her thirty-third year), and while rising daily in poetical power and poetical reputation.

Her highest literary merit was, however, not known until after her death. Of all poetesses, George Sand herself not excepted, she seems to me to touch with the sweetest, the firmest, the most delicate hand, the difficult chords of female passion. There is a reality in her love, and in the verse that tells it, which cannot be read without a deep and tender sympathy. Beautiful and statuesque as her sketches from the antique undoubtedly are, I prefer to quote from these posthumous poems, written from her very heart of hearts, in which passion seems to burst unconsciously into poetry.

#### LOVE'S MEMORY.

I wove a wreath, 'twas fresh and fair,  
Rich roses in their crimson pride,  
And the blue harebell flowers were there ;—

I wove and flung the wreath aside :  
Too much did those bright blossoms speak  
Of thy dear eyes and youthful cheek.

I took my lute ; methought its strain  
Might wile the heavy hours along ;  
I strove to fill my heart and brain  
With the sweet breath of ancient song :

In vain ; whate'er I made my choice  
Was fraught with thy bewitching voice.

And down I laid the restless lute,  
And turned me to the poet's page ;  
And vainly deemed that converse mute,  
Unmingled might my heart engage :  
But in the poet's work I find  
The fellow essence of thy mind.

I wandered midst the silent wood,  
And sought the greenest, coolest glade,  
Where not a sunbeam might intrude ;  
And in a chestnut's quiet shade  
I sate, and in that leafy gloom,  
Thought of the darkness of the tomb.

And strove to lead my heart to drink  
At the deep founts of wandering thought,  
To ponder on the viewless link  
Between our souls and bodies wrought ;  
To quench my passionate dreams of thee  
Awhile in that philosophy.

Yet, all the while, thine image bright,  
Still flitted by my mind to win,  
Casting through dreamy thoughts its light,  
Like sunshine that *would* enter in ;  
And every leaf and every tree  
Seemed quivering with beams of thee.

Beloved ! I will strive no more !  
Thine image, in vice-regal power,  
Shall ruling sit all memories o'er,  
Throned in my heart, until the hour  
When thou thyself shalt come again,  
Restoring there thine olden reign.

The next poem is also written in a hopeful mood :—

Fear not, beloved, though clouds may lower,  
    Whilst rainbow visions melt away,  
Faith's holy star hath still a power  
    That may the deepest midnight sway.  
Fear not ! I take a prophet's tone,  
    Our love can neither wane nor set ;  
My heart grows strong in trust : mine own,  
    We shall be happy yet !

What though long anxious years have passed,  
    Since this true heart was vowed to thine,  
There comes for us a light at last,  
    Whose beam upon our path shall shine.  
We, who have loved 'mid doubts and fears,  
    Yet never with one hour's regret ;  
There comes a joy to gild our tears ;  
    We shall be happy yet !

Ay, by the wandering birds, that find  
    A home beyond the mountain wave,  
Through wind, and rain, and hail, combined  
    To bow them to an ocean grave ;  
By summer suns that brightly rise,  
    Though erst in mournful tears they set ;  
By all Love's hopeful prophesies,  
    We shall be happy yet !

It is really pleasant to know that, although the bliss was short in duration, yet the vows of that faithful heart were heard. Here is one other love-note :—

Another year is dying fast,  
    A checquered year of joy and woe,  
And dark and light alike are past,  
    The rose and thorn at once laid low :  
All things are changed ;—and I am changed,  
    Even in the love I knew before,  
Not that my heart can be estranged,  
    But I have learnt to love thee more.

Yes, to mine ear thine accents all  
 Have grown more welcome and more glad,  
 Thy coming step more musical,  
 And thy departing tread more sad.  
 They say the first bright dawn of love  
 Hath bliss no other time can show ;  
 But I have lived and learned to prove  
 How dearer far its future glow.

Their disappointments we have proved,  
 Dark clouds across our path have been ;  
 Yet better through them all we loved,  
 As dark and drearier grew the scene.  
 Oh ! would this truth could bring relief  
 To thee, when earthly cares annoy,  
 That I would rather share thy grief  
 Than revel in another's joy.

A temperament so framed must, of necessity, take  
 pleasure in the beauties of Nature. I must make  
 room for a few stanzas of her

、 ANTICIPATIONS OF THE COUNTRY.

The summer sunshine falls  
 O'er the hot vistas of the crowded towns,  
 Startling the dusty walls  
 With beauty and with glory not their own ;  
 The summer skies are bright,  
 A canopy of peace above the strife  
 Of human hearts that fight  
 And struggle on the battle-plain of life.

Summers have passed away  
 Since I a dweller mid this scene became,  
 And still their earliest ray  
 Hath sent a thirsty longing through my frame ;  
 A longing to be far  
 In the green woodlands, in the pastures fair,  
 And not as travellers are ;  
 My heart hath yearned to be a dweller there.

It comes, it comes at last :  
 All I have panted for is near me now ;  
 Ere many hours have past,  
 A cool untroubled breeze shall fan my brow.  
 The faint continuous hum  
 That hath been round me till 'twas scarcely heard,  
 No more shall near me come  
 To mar the melodies of bee or bird.

No more the sultry street  
 Shall echo to my quick uneasy tread ;  
 Gladly I turn my feet  
 To where the turf in daisied pride is spread.  
 No more the whirling wheel,  
 The tramping horses, and the people's shout ;—  
 Oh ! how my heart will feel  
 The pleasant quiet circling me about.

Blessed to go away,  
 To where the wild-flower blooms and wood-bird sings,  
 And lightly o'er the spray  
 The purple vetch its wreathing garland flings.

\* \* \* \* \*

One more I must quote, of a still different strain.  
 It was left without a title, a mere fragment amongst  
 her papers ; but the Editor of the " Dublin University  
 Magazine " has called it

#### THE GIFTED.

Oh, woe for those whose dearest themes  
 Must rest within the bosom's fold !  
 Oh, woe for those who live on dreams,  
 Unheeded by the coarse and cold.  
 They have a hidden life, akin  
 To nothing in this earthly sphere ;  
 They have a glorious world within,  
 Where nothing mortal may appear ;  
 A world of song, and flower, and gem,  
 Yet woe for them ! Oh, woe for them !

Such his perplexing grief who seeks  
A refuge upon stranger shores ;  
In vain to foreign ears he speaks,  
In vain their sympathy implores.  
The same sad fate a bark might prove,  
Laden with gold or princely store,  
Without a guiding star above,  
With an unmeasured deep before.  
The world doth scorn them, gibe, condemn ;—  
Woe for the gifted ! Woe for them !

Surely this was a very remarkable woman ; and these poems (there are many more of nearly equal beauty) should not be left to the perishable record of a magazine. Her earliest publications were, as I have said, of little worth ; but enough of the highest merit might be collected to form an enduring memorial of her genius and her virtues.

## XVIII.

## AMERICAN ORATORS.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

ONE of the greatest, if not the very greatest, of the living orators of America, is beyond all manner of doubt, Daniel Webster. That he is also celebrated as a lawyer and a statesman is a matter of course in that practical country, where even so high a gift as that of eloquence is brought to bear on the fortunes of individuals and the prosperity of the commonwealth—no idle pilaster placed for ornament, but a solid column aiding to support the building. A column, indeed, stately and graceful with its Corinthian capital, gives no bad idea of Mr. Webster ; of his tall and muscular person, his massive features, noble head, and the general expression of placid strength by which he is distinguished. This is a mere fanciful comparison ; but Sir Augustus Calcott's fine figure of Columbus has been reckoned very like him ; a resemblance that must have been fortuitous, since the picture was painted before the artist had even seen the celebrated orator.

When in England some ten or twelve years ago, Mr. Webster's calm manner of speaking excited much admiration, and perhaps a little surprise, as contrasted



with the astounding and somewhat rough rapidity of progress which is the chief characteristic of his native land. And yet that calmness of manner was just what might be expected from a countryman of Washington, earnest, thoughtful, weighty, wise. No visitor to London ever left behind him pleasanter recollections, and I hope that the good impression was reciprocal. Everybody was delighted with his geniality and taste; and he could hardly fail to like the people who so heartily liked him. Amongst our cities and our scenery he admired that most which was most worthy of admiration; preferring, in common with many of the most gifted of his countrymen, our beautiful Oxford, whose winding street exhibits such a condensation of picturesque architecture, mixed with water, trees, and gardens, with ancient costume, with eager youth, with by-gone associations and rising hopes, certainly to any of our new commercial towns, and perhaps, as mere picture to London herself; and carrying home with him as one of the most precious and characteristic memorials of the land of his forefathers, a large collection of architectural engravings, representing our magnificent Gothic cathedrals, and such of our Norman castles and Tudor manor-houses, as have escaped the barbarities of modern improvers. We are returning ourselves to that style now; but twelve years ago it was his own good taste, and not the fashion of the day that prompted the preference.

I owe to his kindness, and to that of my admirable friend, Mr. Kenyon, who accompanied him, the honour and pleasure of a visit from Mr. Webster and his amiable family in their transit from Oxford to

Windsor ;—my local position between these two points of attraction has often procured for me the gratification of seeing my American friends when making that journey ;—but during *this* visit a little circumstance occurred so characteristic, so graceful, and so gracious, that I cannot resist the temptation of relating it.

Walking in my cottage garden, we talked naturally of the roses and pinks that surrounded us, and of the different indigenous flowers of our island and of the United States. I had myself had the satisfaction of sending to my friend, Mr. Theodore Sedgwick, a hamper containing roots of many English plants familiar to our poetry : the common ivy—how could they want ivy who had had no time for ruins ?—the primrose and the cowslip, immortalized by Shakespeare and by Milton ; and the sweet-scented violets, both white and purple, of our hedgerows and our lanes ; that known as the violet in America (Mr. Bryant somewhere speaks of it as “the yellow violet”) being, I suspect, the little wild pansy (*viola tricolor*) renowned as the love-in-idleness of Shakespeare’s famous compliment to Queen Elizabeth. Of these we spoke ; and I expressed an interest in two flowers known to me only by the vivid description of Miss Martineau : the scarlet lily of New York and of the Canadian woods, and the fringed gentian of Niagara. I observed that our illustrious guest made some remark to one of the ladies of his party ; but I little expected that, as soon after his return as seeds of these plants could be procured, I should receive a packet of each, signed and directed by his own hand. How much pleasure these little kindnesses give !

And how many such have come to me from over the same wide ocean !

I could tell another story also of a great American orator ; a story told to me two or three years before this occurrence by another distinguished American visitor. He told it to me with the low tone of a deep sympathy one summer evening in my old garden room, the moon rising red and full above the pyramid of geraniums, and the scent of a thousand flowers floating upon the air.

I do not know why I tell it here ; except that both stories belong in some sort to my garden, and that both relate to men eminent in America as lawyers and as statesman ; although of my friend's hero, for obvious reasons, I do not venture to give the name. Many years have passed since I heard that interesting narrative, and in small circumstances of detail I may mistake ; but the one great fact, the admirable self-denial and self-sacrifice can never be forgotten. It strikes too deep a root in the heart.

The story was of a father, one of those sturdy pioneers of American civilization, who hew their way through the Western Forest, and of his two stalwart boys. They had built a homestead, and cleared many acres around them, when, during a pause in their labours, one of the sons (I think the younger) addressed his father to this effect : " Father ! the house is raised ; the trees are down ; the fields are fenced. You have my brother to help you and can do without me. Let me go to the town and study. I feel that I was born to fight my way amongst men, and not to wear out my days in the toils of a husbandman."

The father must have been worthy of such a son,

for he understood him, and felt the full force of the appeal. "Well, my boy," said he; "go where you will, and my blessing shall go with you. Take these dollars and make them last as long as you can, for I have no more to give."

So the bold adventurer sallied forth to the nearest town where education was to be won. The dollars were but few; and the young pupil, although a model of frugality and application, found himself penniless long before he had fought his way through the college course. His courage, however, never failed. By that time he had discovered his own strength. He engaged with a lawyer to write for him during the evenings and by night, whilst he pursued his regular studies by day; thus defraying his own expenses, whether for education or for living; and evincing in his legal avocations such extraordinary ability and aptness, that by the time he had arrived at the head of his class, his friend the lawyer furnished him with a letter to his own brother, then in high practice in the chief town of the State, assuring him "that the recommendation which that letter contained would secure to him immediate employment, and eventually, with his own powers and perseverance, all that he required for a high success in life."

Enchanted with his prospects, our adventurer set forth upon a visit to his forest home, to take leave of his parents before the long absence which he anticipated.

On his arrival at the farm, he found the delight and pride which such a career could hardly fail to claim; but he found also that which he had seen no cause to expect—the brother whom he had left behind

content with healthful labour sickening and drooping under the same hunger and thirst for mental improvement that he himself had experienced some years before. What was the resolve of that noble heart? How did he act under such a trial? He laid his letter of introduction aside—that letter which was to command fortune! He took his brother with him to the town which he had quitted as he thought for ever; placed him in the college where he himself had studied; returned to his old friend the lawyer; resumed his labours in the office, and worked calmly on until the brother, whom he wholly supported, aided by his instructions, had overcome all his disadvantages and attained the high place in the classes that he himself had occupied.

This was my visitor's story. I only wish I could tell it to my readers as he told it to me. But even under all the imperfections of my poor narrative, and lacking the crowning name that gives to it such a power of contrast, it still seems to me almost unequalled in its simplicity and grandeur of self-sacrifice. When some powerful monarch, like Charles the Fifth, abdicates the thrones of Germany and Spain and the Indies, it sounds much. But then it is a sickly, aged, disenchanted man, who knows full well the vanity and nothingness of what he resigns; who has felt for many a year how weary a thing it is to be an Emperor. Besides, he is an Emperor still. The eyes of the world are upon him. He has only put on a new form of royalty. Now here is a young, an ambitious, a self-reliant spirit, who puts aside, not by one grand and solemn abdication, but by the quiet, silent, painful effort of days and months and years, the most

precious crown of all the world, the bright crown Hope.

After some natural exclamations of admiration, came the equally natural question, "Did that favoured brother prove himself worthy of such a sacrifice?"

"Alas!" said my friend, "he lived only long enough to show how worthy he would have proved. He had already taken his place amongst the most eminent lawyers of Massachusetts when he was snatched away by death."

To return to Mr. Webster : I quote (from a fine American edition of his speeches, sent to me by a friend, who gave every promise of following in the same track) part of an "argument on the trial of John F. Knapp, for the murder of Joseph White, Esq., of Salem in the county of Essex, Massachusetts, on the night of the 6th of April, 1830.

I choose this thrilling story of a great crime, not merely on account of the fine picture which it presents of an old man murdered in his sleep, and the state of mind of the murderer, but because, as a subject of universal interest, the eloquence bestowed on such a theme will be better appreciated in England than those speeches which, referring to national policy, demand of the reader a certain acquaintance not only with the internal government, but with the position of conflicting parties in the United States. I might also have another reason for my selection ; a desire to adduce the authority of so eminent a statesman trained under the freest of all institutions and the most sparing of capital punishment, and passing his life in the vindication of individual and national

liberty, against the unhealthy and morbid sympathy with crime and criminals, which is one of the crying evils of our day.

Short as my extracts from this magnificent speech must necessarily be, the introductory statement is essential to their comprehension.

"Mr. White, a highly respectable and wealthy citizen of Salem, about eighty years of age, was found on the morning of the 7th of April, 1830, in his bed murdered, under such circumstances as to create a strong sensation in that town and throughout the community.

"Richard Crowninshield, George Crowninshield, Joseph J. Knapp, and John F. Knapp were, a few weeks after, arrested on a charge of having perpetrated the murder, and committed for trial. Joseph J. Knapp soon after, under the promise of favour from Government, made a full confession of the crime and the circumstances attending it. In a few days after this disclosure was made, Richard Crowninshield, who was supposed to have been the principal assassin, committed suicide.

"A Special Session of the Supreme Court was ordered by the Legislature for the trial of the prisoners at Salem, in July. At that time, John F. Knapp was indicted as principal in the murder, and George Crowninshield and Joseph J. Knapp as accessories.

"On account of the death of Chief Justice Parker, which occurred on the 26th of July, the court adjourned to Tuesday, the 3rd of August, when it proceeded in the trial of John F. Knapp. Joseph J. Knapp being called upon, refused to testify, and the pledge of the Government was withdrawn.

"At the request of the prosecuting officers of the Government, Mr. Webster appeared as counsel and assisted at the trial.

"Mr. Dexter addressed the jury on behalf of the prisoner, and was succeeded by Mr. Webster in the following speech :—

"I am little accustomed, gentlemen, to the part which I am now attempting to perform. Hardly more than once or twice has it happened to me to be concerned, on the side of the Government, in any criminal prosecution whatever ; and never, until the present occasion, in any case affecting life.

"But I very much regret that it should have been thought necessary to suggest to you that I am brought here to hurry you against the law and beyond the evidence. I hope I have too much regard for justice, and too much respect for my own character, to attempt either ; and were I to make such attempt, I am certain that in this court nothing could be carried against the law, and that gentlemen intelligent and just as you are, are not by any power to be hurried beyond the evidence. Though I could well have wished to shun this occasion, I have not felt at liberty to withhold my professional assistance, when it is supposed that I might be in some degree useful in investigating and discovering the truth, respecting this most extraordinary murder. It has seemed to be a duty incumbent on me, as on every other citizen, to do my best and my utmost to bring to light the perpetrators of this crime. Against the prisoner at the bar I cannot have the slightest prejudice. I would not do him the smallest injury or injustice. But I do not affect to be indifferent to the discovery and the punishment



of this deep guilt. I cheerfully share in the opprobrium, how much soever it may be, which is cast on those who feel and manifest an anxious concern that all who had a part in planning, or a hand in executing this deed of midnight assassination may be brought to answer for their enormous guilt at the bar of public justice. Gentlemen, it is a most extraordinary case. In some respects it has hardly a precedent anywhere ; certainly none in our New England history. This bloody drama exhibited no suddenly excited ungovernable rage. The actors in it were not surprised by any lion-like temptation, springing upon their virtue and overcoming it, before resistance could begin. Nor did they do the deed to glut savage vengeance, or satiate long-settled and deadly hate. It was a cool, calculating, money-making murder. It was all ' hire and salary, not revenge.' It was the weighing of money against life ; the counting out of so many pieces of silver against so many ounces of blood.

"An aged man, without an enemy in the world, in his own house, and in his own bed, is made the victim of a butcherly murder for mere pay. Truly, here is a new lesson for painters and poets. Whoever shall hereafter draw the portrait of murder, if he will show it as it has been exhibited in an example where such example was last to have been looked for, in the very bosom of our New England society, let him not give it the grim visage of Moloch, the brow knitted by revenge, the face black with settled hate, and the blood-shot eye emitting livid fires of malice. Let him draw rather a decorous, smooth-faced, bloodless demon ; a picture in repose rather than in action ; not so much an example of human nature in its

depravity and its paroxysms of crime as an infernal nature, a fiend, in the ordinary display and development of his character,

“The deed was executed with a degree of self-possession and steadiness equal to the wickedness with which it was planned. The circumstances now clearly in evidence spread out the whole scene before us. Deep sleep had fallen on the destined victim and on all beneath his roof. A heathful old man to whom sleep was sweet, the first sound slumbers of the night held him in their soft though strong embrace. The assassin enters through the window already prepared into an unoccupied apartment. With noiseless foot he passes the lonely hall, half-lighted by the moon ; he winds up the ascent of the stairs, and reaches the door of the chamber. Of this he moves the lock, by soft and continuous pressure, till it turns on its hinges without noise, and he enters and beholds his victim before him. The room was uncommonly open to the admission of light. The face of the innocent sleeper was turned from the murderer, and the beams of the moon resting on the grey locks of the aged temple, showed him where to strike. The fatal blow is given ! and the victim passes without a struggle or a motion from the repose of sleep to the repose of death ! It is the assassin’s purpose to make sure work ; and he yet plies the dagger, though it was obvious that life had been destroyed by the blow of the bludgeon. He even raises the aged arm, that he may not fail in his aim at the heart, and replaces it again over the wounds of the poniard. To finish the picture, he explores the wrist for the pulse. He feels for it, and

ascertains that it beats no longer ! It is accomplished. The deed is done. He retreats, retraces his steps to the window, passes through it as he came in, and escapes. He has done the murder—no eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The *secret* is his own, and it is safe.

“Ah ! gentlemen, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner where the guilty can bestow it and say that it is safe. Not to speak of that Eye which glances through all disguises and beholds everything as in the splendour of noon. Such secrets of guilt are never safe from detection, even by men. True it is, generally speaking, that ‘murder will out.’ True it is that Providence hath so ordained, and doth so govern things, that those who break the great law of heaven by shedding man’s blood, seldom succeed in avoiding discovery. Especially in a case exciting so much attention as this, discovery must come and will come sooner or later. A thousand eyes turn at once to explore every man, every thing, every circumstance connected with the time and place ; a thousand ears catch every whisper ; a thousand excited minds intensely dwell on the scene, shedding all their light, and ready to kindle the slightest circumstance into a blaze of discovery. Meantime, the guilty soul cannot keep its own secret. It is false to itself ; or rather it feels an irresistible impulse of conscience to be true to itself. It labours under its guilty possession, and knows not what to do with it. The human heart was not made for the residence of such an inhabitant. It finds itself preyed on by a torment which it dares not acknowledge to God or man. A vulture is

•

devouring it, and it can ask no sympathy or assistance either from heaven or earth. The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him, and like the evil spirits of which we read, it overcomes him and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears it working in the very silence of his thoughts. It has become his master. It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicions from without begin to embarrass him, and the net of circumstance to entangle him, the fatal *secret* struggles with still greater violence to burst forth. It must be confessed, it *will* be confessed, there is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.

“Much has been said on this occasion of the excitement which has existed and still exists, and of the extraordinary measures taken to discover and punish the guilty. No doubt there has been, and is much excitement, and strange indeed were it had it been otherwise. Should not all the peaceable and well-disposed naturally feel concerned, and naturally exert themselves to bring to punishment the authors of this secret assassination? Did you, gentlemen, sleep quite as quietly in your beds after this murder as before? Was it not a case for rewards, for meetings, for committees, for the united efforts of all the good, to find out a band of murderous conspirators, of midnight ruffians, and to bring them to the bar of justice and law? If this be excitement, is it an unnatural or an improper excitement?

“It seems to me, gentlemen, that there are appear-

ances of another feeling, of a very different nature and character, not very extensive I would hope, but still there is too much evidence of its existence. Such is human nature, that some persons lose their abhorrence of crime, in their admiration of its magnificent exhibitions. Ordinary vice is reprobated by them, but extraordinary guilt, exquisite wickedness, the high flights and poetry of crime, seize on the imagination, and lead them to forget the depth of the guilt in admiration of the excellence of the performance, or the unequalled atrocity of the purpose. There are those in our day who have made great use of this infirmity of our nature; and by means of it done infinite injury to the cause of good morals. They have affected not only the taste, but, I fear, also the principles of the young, the heedless and the imaginative, by the exhibition of interesting and beautiful monsters. They render depravity attractive, sometimes by the polish of its manners, and sometimes by its very extravagance; and study to show off crime under all the advantages of cleverness and dexterity. Gentlemen, this is an extraordinary murder, but it is still a murder. We are not to lose ourselves in wonder at its origin, or in gazing on its cool and skilful execution. We are to detect and punish it; and while we proceed with caution against the prisoner, and are to be sure that we do not visit on his head the offences of others, we are yet to consider that we are dealing with a case of most atrocious crime, which has not the slightest circumstance about it to soften its enormity. It is murder, deliberate, concerted, malicious murder.

\*

\*

\*

“It is said ‘that laws are made, not for the punishment of the guilty, but for the protection of the innocent.’ This is not quite accurate perhaps, but if so, we hope they will be so administered as to give that protection. But who are the innocent whom the law would protect? Gentlemen, Joseph White was innocent. They are innocent, who having lived in the fear of God through the day, wish to sleep in peace through the night in their own beds. The law is established that those who live quietly may sleep quietly, that they who do no harm may feel none. The gentleman can think of none that are innocent except the prisoner at the bar—not yet convicted. Is a proved conspirator to murder innocent? Are the Crowninshields and the Knapps innocent? What is innocence? How deep-stained with blood, how reckless in crime, how sunk in depravity may it be, and yet remain innocence? The law is made, if we would speak with entire accuracy, to protect the innocent by punishing the guilty. But there are those innocent out of court as well as in; innocent citizens never suspected of crime, as well as innocent prisoners at the bar.

“The criminal law is not founded on a principle of ♦vengeance. It does not punish that it may inflict suffering. The humanity of the law feels and regrets every pain it causes, every hour of restraint it imposes, and more deeply still, every life it forfeits. But it uses evil as the means of preventing greater evil. It seeks to deter from crime by the example of punishment. This is its true, and only true main object. It restrains the liberty of the few offenders, that the many who do not offend may enjoy their own liberty.

It forfeits the life of the offender that other murders may not be committed. The law might open the jails and at once set free all prisoners accused of offences ; and it ought to do so if it could be made certain that no other offence would hereafter be committed. Because it punishes, not to satisfy any desire to inflict pain, but simply to prevent the repetition of crimes. When the guilty, therefore, are not punished, the law has so far failed of its purpose ; the safety of the innocent is so far endangered. Every unpunished murder takes away something from the security of every man's life. And whenever a jury, through whimsical and ill-founded scruples suffer the guilty to escape, they make themselves answerable for the augmented danger of the innocent."

[Then follow nearly forty closely printed octavo pages of the most minute and ablest dissection of every part of the case ; the most crushing answer to the opposite counsel ; and the most searching and subtle analysis of the evidence. Every scene of the tragedy, from the first conception of the plot to the awful catastrophe, passes before us as if we had been present bodily. We are eye and ear-witnesses to every incident. Mr. Webster winds up his speech with the following impressive peroration.]

"Gentlemen, I have gone through with the evidence in this case, and have endeavoured to state it plainly and fairly before you. I think there are conclusions to be drawn from it which you cannot doubt. I think you cannot doubt that there was a conspiracy formed for the purpose of committing this murder, and who the conspirators were.

"That you cannot doubt that the Crowninshields and the Knapps were parties in this conspiracy.

"That you cannot doubt that the prisoner at the bar knew that the murder was to be done on the 6th of April.

"That you cannot doubt that the murderers of Captain White were the suspicious persons seen in and about Brown Street on that night.

"That you cannot doubt that Richard Crowninshield was the perpetrator of that crime.

"That you cannot doubt that the prisoner at the bar was in Brown Street on that night.

"If there, then it must be by agreement, to countenance, to aid the perpetrator : and if so, then he is guilty as a principal.

"Gentlemen,—Your whole concern should be to do your duty, and leave consequences to take care of themselves. You will receive the law from the court. Your verdict, it is true, may endanger the prisoner's life, but then it is to save other lives. If the prisoner's guilt has been shown and proved beyond all reasonable doubt, you will convict him. If such reasonable doubts of guilt still remain, you will acquit him. You are the judges of the whole case. You owe a duty to the public, as well as to the prisoner at the bar. You cannot pretend to be wiser than the law. Your duty is a plain, straight-forward one. Doubtless, we would all judge him in mercy. Towards him, as an individual, the law inculcates no hostility ; but towards him, if proved to be a murderer, the law, and the oaths you have taken, and public justice, demand that you do your duty.

"With consciences satisfied with the discharge of duty, no consequences can harm you. There is no evil that we cannot either face or fly from, but the consciousness of duty disregarded.



"A sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent like the Deity. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the seas, duty performed or duty violated is still with us for our happiness or our misery. If we say the darkness shall cover us, in the darkness as in the light our obligations are yet with us. We cannot escape their power, nor fly from their presence. They are with us in this life, will be with us at its close; and in that scene of inconceivable solemnity which lies yet farther onward, we shall still find ourselves surrounded by the consciousness of duty, to pain us wherever it has been violated, and to console us so far as God may have given us grace to perform it."

There is no need to enhance the merit of eloquence like this; but I recollect to have heard that this immense effort was made immediately after a journey of unparalleled rapidity and fatigue, which would have completely exhausted the energy of any man but Mr. Webster.

## XIX.

## OLD AUTHORS.

## BEN JONSON.

"O RARE Ben Jonson!" so said his contemporaries, and those contemporaries the greatest dramatic poets, the greatest poets of any age or clime. "O rare Ben Jonson!" says his tomb in Westminster Abbey; "O rare Ben Jonson!" echo we. But I doubt much whether our praises be not founded on very different qualities from those which were hailed with such acclaim by the marvellous assembly of wits who congregated at the "Mermaid." Hear what Beaumont in his celebrated epistle to Jonson, says of that fair company. He writes to him from the country :

"Methinks the little wit I had is lost  
Since I saw you ; for wit is like a rest  
Held up at Tennis, which men do the best  
With the best gamesters. What things have we seen  
Done at the 'Mermaid!' heard words that have been  
So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,  
As if that every one, from whom they came,  
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,  
And had resolved to live a fool the rest  
Of his dull life ; then, when there hath been shown  
Wit able enough to justify the town  
For three days past ; wit that might warrant be  
For the whole city to talk foolishly  
Till that were cancelled ; and when that was gone,  
We left an air behind us, which alone  
Was able to make the two next companies  
Right witty ; though but downright fools, mere wise."

These men, admirable judges although they were, seem to have regarded with what we cannot but think an over-admiration the art which wanted the crowning triumph of looking like nature, and the learning, which displayed rather than pervading, overlays and encumbers his finely-constructed but heavy and unwieldy plays. We of this age, a little too careless perhaps of learned labour, would give a whole wilderness of Catalines and Poetasters, and even of Alchemists and Volpones, for another score of the exquisite lyrics which are scattered carelessly through the plays and masques which—strange contrast with the rugged verse in which they are embedded—seem to have burst into being at a stroke, just as the evening primrose flings open her fair petals at the close of the day. Lovelier songs were never written than these wild and irregular ditties. Here are some of them.

## HYMN TO DIANA, IN "CYNTHIA'S REVELS."

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,  
 Now the sun is laid to sleep,  
 Seated in thy silver car,  
 State in wonted manners keep.  
     Hesperus entreats thy light,  
     Goddess excellently bright !

Earth, let not thy envious shade  
 Dare itself to interpose ;  
 Cynthia's shining orb was made  
 Heaven to clear, when day did close.  
     Bless us then with wished sight,  
     Goddess excellently bright !

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,  
 And thy crystal shining quiver ;  
 Give unto the flying hart  
 Space to breathe, how short soever.  
     Thou that mak'st a day of night,  
     Goddess excellently bright !

## SONG, FROM THE SAME.

Slow, slow fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears,  
 Yet slower, yet, O faintly, gentle springs !  
 List to the heavy part the music bears,  
 Woe weeps out her division when she sings.  
     Droop herbs and flowers,  
     Fall grief in showers,  
     Our beauties are not ours.  
         O I could still  
 (Like melting snow upon some craggy hill)  
     Drop, drop, drop, drop,  
 Since summer's pride is now a withered daffodil.

SONG OF NIGHT, IN THE MASQUE OF "THE VISION OF  
DELIGHT."

Break, Phantasie, from thy cave of cloud,  
 And spread thy purple wings ;  
 Now all thy figures are allowed,  
 And various shapes of things.  
 Create of airy forms a stream,  
 It must have blood, and nought of phlegm ;  
 And though it be a waking dream,  
     *Chorus.* Yet let it like an odour rise  
         To all the senses here,  
     And fall like sleep upon their eyes,  
         Or music in their ear.

## CHORUS, FROM THE SAME.

In curious knots and mazes so,  
 The spring at first was taught to go ;  
 And Zephyr, when he came to woo  
 His Flora, had their motions too :  
     And thus did Venus learn to lead  
     The Idalian brawls, and so to tread  
     As if the wind, not she, did walk,  
     Nor prest a flower, nor bowed a stalk.

## SONG, IN "THE MASQUE OF BEAUTY."

So Beauty on the waters stood  
 When Love had severed Earth from Flood!  
 So, when he parted Air from Fire,  
 He did with concord all inspire!  
 And then a motion he them taught  
 That elder than himself was Thought;  
 Which Thought was yet the child of earth,  
 For Love is elder than his birth.

## SONG, FROM "THE SILENT WOMAN."

*(A lesson, dear ladies.)*

Still to be neat, still to be drest  
 As you were going to a feast;  
 Still to be powdered, still perfumed:  
 Lady, it is to be presumed,  
 Though art's hid causes are not found,  
 All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face  
 That makes simplicity a grace;  
 Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:  
 Such sweet neglect more taketh me,  
 Than all the adulteries of art;  
 They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

## FROM A CELEBRATION OF CHARIS.

See the chariot at hand here of Love,  
 Wherein my lady rideth;  
 Each that draws is a swan or a dove,  
 And well the car Love guideth.  
 As she goes all hearts do duty  
     Unto her beauty,  
 And enamoured do wish that they might  
     But enjoy such a sight,  
 That they still were to run by her side  
 Thorough swords, thorough seas wheresoever she would ride.  
 VOL. I. Y

Do but look on her eyes, they do light  
 All that loves world compriseth !  
 Do but look on her hair, it is bright  
 As love's star, when it riseth !  
 Do but mark, her forehead's smother  
 Than words that soothe her !  
 And from her arched brows such a grace  
 Sheds itself through the face,  
 As alone there triumphs to the life  
 All the gain, all the good, of the elements' strife !  
 Have you seen but a bright lily grow  
 Before rude hands have touched it ?  
 Have you marked but the fall o' the snow  
 Before the soil hath smutched it ?  
 Ha' you felt the wool of the beaver,  
 Or swan's down ever ?  
 Or have smelt o' the bud o' the briar ?  
 Or the nard in the fire ?  
 Or have tasted the bag of the bee ?  
 O so white ! O so soft ! O so sweet is she !

## SONG.

Oh ! do not worship with those eyes,  
 Lest I be sick with seeing !  
 Nor cast them down, but let them rise  
 Lest shame destroy their being.  
 Oh ! be not angry with those fires  
 For then their threats will kill me ;  
 Nor look too kind on my desires,  
 For then my hopes will spill me,  
 Oh ! do not steep them in thy tears,  
 For so will sorrow slay me ;  
 Nor spread them, as distract with fears,  
 My own enough betray me.

## SONG TO CELIA.

I should hardly perhaps have thought of inserting  
 a song so familiar to every ear as the following, had I

not, in turning over Jonson's huge volume, been reminded of a circumstance connected with it which greatly startled me at the moment. Milton talks of airs "married to immortal verse;" but it should seem that there is no marriage without an occasional divorce; for the last time I heard the well-known melody which belongs to this fine Anacreontic, as indissolubly as its own peculiar perfume to a flower, was in an Independent Chapel, where widely different words—the words of a hymn—were adapted to the air. It was John Wesley, I believe, who said that he saw no reason why Satan should have all the best tunes; and I should not lightly impugn the wisdom of any axiom of John Wesley, who understood human nature as well as most men. But in this instance, such is the force of association, that I can scarcely say how strongly I felt the discrepancy, all the more for the impressive plainness and simplicity of the Presbyterian mode of worship, and the earnest eloquence of the white-haired preacher. The sermon was half over before I had recovered the tone of feeling proper to the place and the occasion.

Drink to me only with thine eyes,  
And I will pledge with mine;  
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,  
And I'll not look for wine.  
The thirst that from the soul doth rise  
Must surely be divine;  
But might I of Love's nectar sup  
I would not change for wine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,  
Not so much honouring thee,  
As giving it a hope, that there  
It could not withered be.

But thou thereon didst only breathe  
 And sent'st it back to me:  
 Since when it grows and smells, I swear,  
 Not of itself, but thee.

FIRST SPEECH IN "THE SAD SHEPHERD."

*Enter ŒGLAMONE.*

*Œgla.* Here she was wont to go ! and here ! and here !  
 Just where those daisies, pinks, and violets grow :  
 The world may find the spring by following her,  
 For other print her airy steps ne'er left.  
 Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,  
 Or shake the downy blowball from his stalk !  
 But like the soft west wind she shot along,  
 And where she went the flowers took thickest root,  
 As she had sowed them with her odorous foot.

This delightful pastoral on the story of Robin Hood and Maid Marian is unhappily unfinished. Scarcely half is written, and even that wants the author's last touches.

SPEECH OF MALA, IN "THE PENATES."

If every pleasure were distilled  
 Of every flower in every field,  
 And all that Hybla's hives do yield,  
 Were into one broad mazer filled ;  
 If thereto added all the gums  
 And spice that from Panchaia comes,  
 The odour that Hydasper lends,  
 Or Phoenix, proves before she ends ;  
 If all the air my Flora drew,  
 Or spirit that Zephyr ever blew,  
 Were put therein ; and all the dew  
 That every rosy morning knew ;  
 Yet all diffused upon this bower,  
 To make one sweet detaining hour,  
 Were much too little for the grace  
 And honour you vouchsafe the place.



But if you please to come again,  
 We vow we will not then with vain  
 And empty pastimes entertain  
 Your so desired, though grieved, pain.  
 For we will have the wanton Fauns,  
 That frisking skip about the lawns,  
 The Panisks, and the Sylvans rude,  
 Satyrs, and all that multitude,  
 To dance their wilder rounds about,  
 And cleave the air with many a shout,  
 As they would hunt poor Echo out  
 Of yonder valley, who doth flout  
 Their rustic noise. To visit whom  
 You shall behold whole bevvies come  
 Of gaudy nymphs, whose tender calls  
 Well tuned unto the many falls  
 Of sweet and several sliding rills,  
 That stream from tops of those less hills,  
 Sound like so many silver quills,  
 When Zephyr them with music fills,  
 For them Favorius here shall blow  
 New flowers, that you shall see to grow,  
 Of which each hand a part shall take,  
 And, for your heads, fresh garlands make  
 Wherewith, whilst they your temples round,  
 An air of several birds shall sound  
 An Io Pæan, that shall drown  
 The acclamations at your crown.  
 All this, and more than I have gift of saying,  
 May vows, so you will oft come here a Maying.

## EPITAPH ON THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

Underneath this sable hearse  
 Lies the subject of all verse,  
 Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother;  
 Death, ere thou hast slain another  
 Learn'd and fair and good as she,  
 Time shall throw a dart at thee.

After all we take leave of him, transcribing yet  
another exquisite song, and echoing our first words,  
"O rare Ben Jonson !"

FROM THE MASQUE OF "THE GIPSIES METAMORPHOSED."

To the old, long life and treasure ;  
To the young, all health and pleasure ;  
    To the fair, their face  
    With eternal grace,  
And the soul to be loved at leisure.

To the witty, all clear mirrors ;  
To the foolish, their dark errors ;  
    To the loving sprite  
    A secure delight ;  
To the jealous his own false terrors.

## XX.

## FASHIONABLE POETS.

WILLIAM ROBERT SPENCER.

## A SCHOOL-DAY ANECDOTE.

GRANDSON of two dukes, nursed in the very lap of fashion, and coming into life at the time of all others when wit and fancy, and the lighter graces of poetry, were most cordially welcomed by the higher circles—at a time when the star of Sheridan was still in the ascendant, and that of Moore just appearing on the horizon—William Spencer may be regarded as much the representative of a class, as John Clare, or Robert Burns. The style of his verse eminently airy, polished, and graceful, as well as his personal qualities, combined to render him the idol of that society which, by common consent, we are content to call the best. His varied accomplishments enlivened a country-house, his brilliant wit formed the delight of a dinner-table; while his singular charm of manner, and perhaps of character, gave a permanency to his social success by converting the admirers of an evening into friends for life. With all these genial triumphs, however, we cannot look over the little volume of graceful verse, which is all that now remains of so splendid a reputation, without feeling that the author was born for

better, higher, more enduring purposes ; that the charming trifter, whose verses forty years ago every lady knew by heart, and which are now well-nigh forgotten, ought not to have wasted his high endowments in wreathing garlands for festivals—ought not, above all, to have gone on from youth to age, leading the melancholy life which is all holiday.

Nevertheless we must accept these verses for such as they are, just as we admire unquestioning the wing of a butterfly, or the petal of a flower ; and in their kind they are exquisite. Look at the fancy and the finish of these stanzas !

TO THE LADY ANNE HAMILTON.\*

Too late I staid, forgive the crime,  
Unheeded flew the hours ;  
How noiseless falls the foot of Time  
That only treads on flowers !

What eye with clear account remarks  
The ebbing of his glass,  
When all its sands are diamond sparks  
That dazzle as they pass ?

Ah ! who to sober measurement  
Time's happy swiftness brings,  
When birds of Paradise have lent  
Their plumage for his wings ?

In the next extract there is an unexpected touch of sentiment mixed with its playfulness that is singularly captivating.

---

\* Very sweetly mated with one of the sweetest old Irish airs, "The Yellow Horse."

## GOOD-BYE AND HOW-D'-YE-DO.

One day Good-bye met How-d'-ye-do,  
Too close to shun saluting,  
But soon the rival sisters flew  
From kissing to disputing.

"Away," says How-d'-ye-do; "your mien  
Appals my cheerful nature,  
No name so sad as yours is seen  
In sorrow's nomenclature.

"Whene'er I give one suushine hour,  
Your cloud comes o'er to shade it :  
Where'er I plant one bosom flower,  
Your mildew drops to fade it.

Ere How-d'-ye-do has tuned each tongue  
To Hope's delightful measure,  
Good-bye in Friendship's ear has rung  
The knell of parting pleasure !

"From sorrows past my chemic skill  
Draws smiles of consolation,  
Whilst you from present joys distil  
The tears of separation."

Good-bye replied, "Your statement's true,  
And well your cause you've pleaded ;  
But pray who'd think of How-d'-ye-do,  
Unless Good-bye preceded ?

"Without my prior influence,  
Could yours have ever flourish'd ;  
And can your hand one flower dispense,  
But those my tears have nourish'd ?

"How oft, if at the court of Love  
Concealment be the fashion,  
When How-d'-ye-do has fail'd to move,  
Good-bye reveals the passion !

"How oft, when Cupid's fires decline,  
As every heart remembers,  
One sigh of mine, and only mine,  
Revives the dying embers !

"Go, bid the timid lover choose,  
And I'll resign my charter,  
If he for ten kind How-d'-ye-does  
One kind Good-bye would barter !  
"From love and friendship's kindred source  
We both derive existence,  
And they would both lose half their force,  
Without our joint assistance.  
" 'Tis well the world our merit knows,  
Since time, there's no denying,  
One half in How-d'-ye-doing goes,  
And t' other in Good-byeing !"

Nobody has told the tragedy of Beth-Gelert so well as Mr. Spencer, in his simple but elegant ballad. I do not know if many persons partake my feeling respecting those stories of which the animal world are the heroes, but to me they seem more touching than grander histories of men and women. Dumb creatures—to use that phrase of the common people, which makes in its two homely words so true an appeal to our protection, and our pity—dumb creatures are in their love so faithful, so patient in their sufferings, so submissive under wrong, so powerless for remonstrance or for redress, that we take their part against the human brutes, their oppressors, as naturally and almost as vehemently as we do that of Philoctetes against Ulysses, or of Lear against Goneril. I am not sure that I do not carry my sympathy still farther. In the famous story of the Falcon, for instance, in Boccaccio, where a lover, ruined by the charges to which he puts himself in courting an ungrateful mistress, and owing his very existence to the game struck down for him by a favourite hawk, kills the poor bird to furnish forth a dinner for the haughty beauty when she at last comes to visit him, I never could help thinking that the

enamoured cavalier made a very bad exchange when he lost the falcon and won the lady. His conscience must have pricked him all his life. He had not even, so far as we hear, the consolation, such as it is, of erecting a monument to the memory of his murdered favourite, on which, like Llewelyn, to "hang his horn and spear."

## BETH-GELERT; OR, THE GRAVE OF THE GREYHOUND.

The spearmen heard the bugle sound,  
And cheerily smiled the morn;  
And many a brach and many a hound  
Obeyed Llewelyn's horn.

And still he blew a louder blast,  
And gave a lustier cheer:  
"Come, Gelert, come, wer't never last  
Llewelyn's horn to hear!

"Oh, where does faithful Gelert roam,  
The flower of all his race;  
So true, so brave, a lamb at home,  
A lion in the chace?"

'Twas only at Llewelyn's board  
The faithful Gelert fed;  
He watched, he served, he cheered his lord,  
And sentinelled his bed.

In sooth he was a peerless hound,  
The gift of royal John;  
But now no Gelert could be found,  
And all the chace rode on.

And now, as o'er the rocks and dells,  
The gallant chidings rise,  
All Snowden's craggy chaos yells  
The many-mingled cries.

That day Llewelyn little loved  
The chace of hart and hare;  
And scant and small the booty proved,  
For Gelert was not there.

Unpleased Llewelyn homeward hied ;  
When near the portal seat,  
His truant Gelert he espied  
Bounding his lord to greet.

But when he gained the castle door,  
Aghast the chieftain stood ;  
The hound all o'er was smeared with gore,  
His lips, his fangs, ran blood.

Llewelyn gazed with fierce surprise ;  
Unused such looks to meet,  
His favourite checked his joyful guise,  
And crouched and licked his feet,

Onward in haste Llewelyn passed,  
And on went Gelert too ;  
And still where'er his eyes he cast  
Fresh blood-gouts shocked his view.

O'erturned his infant's bed he found,  
With blood-stained covert rent ;  
And all around the walls and ground  
With recent blood besprent.

He called his child—no voice replied—  
He searched with terror wild ;  
Blood, blood he found on every side,  
But nowhere found his child.

“Hell-hound! my boy's by thee devoured!”  
The frantic father cried ;  
And to the hilt his vengeful sword  
He plunged in Gelert's side.

His suppliant looks as prone he fell  
No pity could impart ;  
But still his Gelert's dying yell  
Passed heavy o'er his heart.

Aroused by Gelert's dying yell  
Some slumberer wakened nigh :  
What words the parent's joy could tell  
To hear his infant's cry !



Concealed beneath a tumbled heap  
His hurried search had missed :  
All glowing from his rosy sleep  
The cherub boy he kissed.  
Nor scathe had he, nor harm, nor dread :  
But the same couch beneath  
Lay a gaunt wolf, all torn and dead,  
Tremendous still in death.  
Ah, what was then Llewelyn's pain !  
For now the truth was clear,  
His gallant hound the wolf had slain  
To save Llewelyn's heir.  
Vain, vain was all Llewelyn's woe :  
" Best of thy kind, Adieu !  
The frantic blow that laid thee low  
This heart shall ever rue !"  
And now a gallant tomb they raise,  
With costly sculptures decked,  
And marbles storied with his praise  
Poor Gelert's bones protect.  
There never could the spearman pass,  
Or forester, unmoved ;  
There oft the tear-besprinkled grass  
Llewelyn's sorrow proved.  
And there he hung his horn and spear,  
And there, as evening fell,  
In fancy's ear he oft would hear  
Poor Gelert's dying yell.  
And till great Snowden's rocks grow old,  
And cease the storm to brave,  
The consecrated spot shall hold  
The name of " Gelert's grave !"

"The Emigrant's Grave" always seemed to me eminently pathetic, and above all, eminently true. There can hardly be a country neighbourhood in

England in which the recollection of some "poor exile of France," equally patient, equally cheerful, equally kind, may not still be found, softening national animosity, and if he were (as often chanced) of the priesthood, effacing the still deeper prejudice that teaches the followers of Luther to dread the members of the Church of Rome.

THE EMIGRANT'S GRAVE.

Why mourn ye? Why strew ye those flowerets around  
On yon new-sodded grave, as ye slowly advance?  
In yon new-sodded grave (ever dear be the ground!)  
Lies the stranger we loved, the poor exile of France!

And is the poor exile at rest from his woe,  
No longer the sport of misfortune and chance?  
Mourn on, village mourners, my tears too shall flow,  
For the stranger we loved, the poor exile of France!

Oh! kind was his nature, though bitter his fate,  
And gay was his converse, though broken his heart;  
No comfort, no hope, his own breast could elate,  
Though comfort and hope he to all could impart.

Ever joyless himself, in the joys of the plain,  
The foremost was he mirth and pleasure to raise;  
How sad was his woe, yet how blithe was his strain,  
When he sang the glad song of more fortunate days!

One pleasure he knew in his straw-cover'd shed  
The way-wearied traveller recruited to see;  
One tear of delight he would drop o'er the bread  
Which he shared with the poor,—the still poorer than he.

And when round his death-bed profusely we cast  
Every gift, every solace our hamlet could bring,  
He blest us with sighs which we thought were his last,  
But he still breathed a prayer for his country and king.

Poor exile, adieu! undisturb'd be thy sleep!  
From the feast, from the wake, from the village-green dance,  
How oft shall we wander at moonlight to weep  
O'er the stranger we loved, the poor exile of France!

To the church-bidden bride shall thy memory impart  
One pang as her eyes on thy cold relics glance;  
One flower from her garland, one tear from her heart,  
Shall drop on the grave of the exile of France!

This is a country picture; in my own childhood I knew many of the numerous colony which took refuge in London from the horrors of the first French Revolution. The lady at whose school I was educated (and he was so much the more efficient partner that it was his school rather than hers), had married a Frenchman, who had been secretary to the Comte de Moustiers, one of the last ambassadors, if not the very last, from Louis Seize to the Court of St. James's. Of course he knew many emigrants of the highest rank, and indeed of all ranks; and being a lively, kind-hearted man, with a liberal hand and a social temper, it was his delight to assemble as many as he could of his poor countrymen and countrywomen around his hospitable supper-table. Something wonderful and admirable it was to see how these Dukes and Duchesses, Marshals and Marquises, Chevaliers and Bishops, bore up under their unparalleled reverses! How they laughed, and talked, and squabbled, and flirted, constant to their high heels, their rouge, and their furbelows, to their old liaisons, their polished sarcasms, their cherished rivalries! They clung even to their *mariages de convenance*; and the very habits which would most have offended our English notions, if we had seen them in their splendid hôtels of the Faubourg St. Germain, won tolerance and pardon when mixed up with such unaffected constancy, and such cheerful resignation.

For the most part these noble exiles had a trifling pecuniary dependency; some had brought with them

jewels enough to sustain them in their simple lodgings in Knightsbridge or Pentonville; to some a faithful steward contrived to forward the produce of some estate too small to have been seized by the early plunderers; to others a rich English friend would claim the privilege of returning the kindness and hospitality of by-gone years. But very many lived literally on the produce of their own industry, the gentlemen teaching languages, music, fencing, dancing, whilst their wives and daughters went out as teachers or governesses, or supplied the shops with those objects of taste in millinery or artificial flowers for which their country is unrivalled. No one was ashamed of these exertions; no one was proud of them. So perfect and so honest was the simplicity with which they entered upon this new course of life, that they did not even seem conscious of its merit. The hope of better days carried them gaily along, and the present evil was lost in the sunshiny future.

Here and there, however, the distress was too real, too pressing to be forgotten; in such cases our good schoolmaster used to contrive all possible measures to assist and to relieve. One venerable couple I remember well. They bore one of the highest names of Brittany, and had possessed large estates, had lost their two sons, and were now in their old age, their sickness, and their helplessness, almost entirely dependent upon the labour of Mdlle Rose, their granddaughter. Rose, what a name for that pallid drooping creature, whose dark eyes looked too large for her face, whose bones seemed starting through her skin, and whose black hair contrasted even fearfully with the wan complexion from which every tinge of healthful colour had long flown! For some time these

interesting persons regularly attended our worthy governess's supper parties, the objects of universal affection and respect. Each seemed to come for the sake of the other; Mademoiselle always bringing with her some ingenious straw-plaiting to make into the fancy bonnets which were then in vogue, rarely raised her head from her work, or allowed herself time to make a hasty meal. It was sad to think how ceaseless must be the industry by which that fair and fragile creature could support the helpless couple who were cast upon her duty and her affection! At last they ceased to appear at the Wednesday parties, and very soon after (Oh! it is the poor that help the poor!) we heard that the good Abbé Calonne (brother to the well-known minister) had undertaken for a moderate stipend the charge of the venerable Count and Countess, while Mdle. Rose, with her straw-plaiting, took up her abode in our school-room, working as indefatigably through our verbs and over our exercises as she had before done through the rattle of the tric-trac table and the ceaseless clatter of French talk.

Now this school of ours was no worse than other schools; indeed it was reckoned among the best conducted, but some way or other the foul weed called exclusiveness had sprung up amongst the half-dozen great girls who, fifty years ago, "gave our little senate laws," to a point that threatened to choke and destroy every plant of a more wholesome influence. Doubtless, long, long, ago, the world and the world's trials, prosperity with the weariness and bitterness it brings, adversity with the joys it takes away, have tamed those proud hearts! But, at the time of which I speak, a committee of Countesses deciding upon petitions fo

vouchers for a subscription ball ; no Chapter of noble canonesses examining into the sixteen quarters required for their candidate ; could by possibility inquire more seriously into the nice questions of station, position, and alliance than the unfledged younglings who constituted our first class. They were merely gentlemen's daughters, and had no earthly right to give themselves airs ; but I suspect that we may sometimes see in elder gentlewomen the same disproportion, and that those who might, from birth, fortune and position, assume such a right, will be the very last to exert their privilege. Luckily for me I was a little girl, protected by my youth and insignificance from the danger of a contagion which it requires a good deal of moral courage to resist. I remember wondering how Mdle. Rose, with her incessant industry, her open desire to sell her bonnets, and her shabby cotton gown, would escape from our censors. Happily she was spared, avowedly because her birth was noble—perhaps because, with all their vulgar denunciations of vulgarity, their fineries, and their vanities, the young girls were better than they knew, and respected in their hearts the very humility which they denounced.

If, however, there were something about the fair Frenchwoman that held in awe the spirit of girlish impertinence, chance soon bestowed upon them, in the shape of a new pupil, an object which called forth all their worst qualities, without stint and without impediment.

The poor child who was destined to become their victim, was a short squat figure, somewhere about nine or ten years of age ; awkward in her carriage, plain in her features, ill-dressed and over-dressed. She hap-

pened to arrive at the same time with the French dancing-master, a Marquis of the *ancien régime*, of whom I am sorry to say, that he seemed so at home in his Terpsichorean vocation, that one could hardly fancy him fit for any other. (Were not *les Marquis* of the old French comedy very much like dancing-masters? I am sure Molière thought so.) At the same time with the French dancing-master did our new fellow-pupil arrive, led into the room by her father; he did not stay five minutes, but that time was long enough to strike Monsieur with a horror, evinced by a series of shrugs which soon rendered the dislike reciprocal. I never saw such a contrast between two men. The Frenchman was slim, and long, and pale; and allowing always for the dancing-master air, which in my secret soul I thought never could be allowed for, he might be called elegant. The Englishman was the beau-ideal of a John Bull, portentous in size, broad, and red of visage; loud of tongue, and heavy in step; he shook the room as he strode, and made the walls echo when he spoke. I rather liked the man, there was so much character about him, and in spite of the coarseness, so much that was bold and hearty. Monsieur shrugged to be sure, but he seemed likely to run away, especially when the stranger's first words conveyed an injunction to the lady of the house, "to take care that no grinning Frenchman had the ordering of his Betsy's feet. If she must learn to dance, let her be taught by an honest Englishman." After which declaration, kissing the little girl very tenderly, the astounding papa took his departure.

Poor Betsy! there she sate, the tears trickling down her cheeks, little comforted by the kind notice of the

governess and the English teacher, and apparently insensible to the silent scorn of her new companions. For my own part, I entertained towards her much of that pity which results from recent experience of the same sort of distress,—

“ A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind.”

I was a little girl myself, abundantly shy and awkward, and I had not forgotten the heart-tug of leaving home, and the terrible loneliness of the first day at school. Moreover, I suspected that in one respect she was much more an object of compassion than myself; I believed her to be motherless: so when I thought nobody was looking or listening, I made some girlish advances towards acquaintanceship, which she was still too shy or too miserable to return, so that, easily repelled myself, as a bashful child is, our intercourse came to nothing. With my elders and betters, the *cancan*, who ruled the school, Betsy stood if possible lower than ever. They had had the satisfaction to discover not only that he lived in the Borough, but that her father (horror of horrors!) was an eminent cheesefactor!—a seller of Stilton! That he was very rich, and had a brother an alderman, rather made matters worse. Poor Betsy only escaped being sent to Coventry by the lucky circumstance of her going that metaphorical journey of her own accord, and never under any temptation speaking to anybody one unnecessary word.

As far as her lessons went, she was, from the false indulgence with which she had been treated, very backward for her age. Our school was, however, really excellent as a place of instruction; so no studies were forced upon her, and she was left to



get acquainted with the house and its ways, and to fall into the ranks as she could.

For the present she seemed to have attached herself to Mdlle. Rose, attracted probably by the sweetness of her countenance, her sadness, and her silence. Her speech could not have attracted Betsy, for in common with many of her exiled countryfolk, she had not in nearly ten years' residence in England learned to speak five English words. But something had won her affection. She had on first being called by the governess, from the dark corner in which she had ensconced herself, crept to the side of the young Frenchwoman, had watched her as she wove her straw plaits, had attempted the simple art with some discarded straws that lay scattered upon the floor; and when Mademoiselle, so far roused herself as to show her the proper way, and to furnish her with the material, she soon became a most efficient assistant in this branch of industry.

No intercourse took place between them. Indeed, as I have said, none was possible, since neither knew a word of the other's language. Betsy was Silence personified; and poor Mdlle. Rose, always pensive and reserved, was now more than ever dejected and oppressed. An opportunity of returning to France had opened to her, and was passing away. She herself was too young to be included in the list of emigrants, and interest had been made with the First Consul for the re-admission of her venerable parents, and perhaps for the ultimate recovery of some property still unsold. But her grandfather was so aged, and her grandmother so sickly, that the expenses of a voyage and a journey, then very formidable to the old and the infirm, were beyond her means, beyond

even her hopes. So she sighed over her straw-plaiting, and submitted.

In the meantime the second Saturday arrived, and with it a summons home to Betsy, who, for the first time gathering courage to address our good governess, asked "if she might be trusted with the bonnet Mdle. Rose had just finished, to shew her aunt—she knew she would like to buy that bonnet, because Mademoiselle had been so good as to let her assist in plaiting it." How she came to know that they were for sale nobody could tell; but our kind governess ordered the bonnet to be put into the carriage, told her the price—(no extravagant one)—called her a good child, and took leave of her till Monday.

Two hours after Betsy and her father re-appeared in the school-room. "Ma'amselle," said he, bawling as loud as he could, with the view, as we afterwards conjectured, of making her understand him—"Ma'amselle, I have no great love for the French, whom I take to be our natural enemies. But you're a good young woman; you've been kind to my Betsy, and have taught her how to make your fallals; and moreover you're a good daughter, and so's my Betsy. She says that she thinks you're fretting because you can't manage to take your grandfather and grandmother back to France again; so as you let her help you in that other handiwork, why you must let her help you in this." Then throwing a heavy purse into her lap, catching his little daughter up in his arms, and hugging her to the honest breast where she hid her tears and her blushes, he departed, leaving poor Mdle. Rose too much bewildered to speak, or to comprehend the happiness that had fallen upon her, and the whole school the better for the lesson.

## XXI.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DRAMATIC AUTHORS.

SSSS

PASSION FOR THE DRAMA.

S F

SS

COLLEY CIBBER—RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

SS F all literary fascinations there is none like that of  
 S the Drama, written or acted. None that begins so  
 SSS early, or that lasts so long.

With regard to actors, it is a sort of possession by evil spirits. Boys and girls from the school-room, and the counting-house, the shop-board, or the college, rush upon the stage, forsaking home and comfort, and the thousand realities of life, in chase of the phantom, Fame. And in authorship, the passion, although not perhaps so common, is hardly less engrossing, or less destructive. The "Honeymoon," one of the most delightful of modern comedies, was the seventh play presented by poor Tobin to different managers. He died, I believe, the very same night that it was performed with unrivalled success, certainly before the intelligence of its triumph could reach him. Gerald Griffin was even less fortunate. "Gisippus" was rejected on all hands, and only produced after his death, and after the destruction of his other tragedies, to secure for its author a posthumous reputation. Many, no doubt, more unfortunate still, have died

and left no name ; and many may still exist, dragging after them a weary weight of hope deferred, and genius unrecognised.

I have some right to talk of the love of the drama, the passionate, absorbing, worshipping love, since it took possession of me at the earliest age, and clung to me long. Nay, I am not even now absolutely sure, that if the Cruvellis and the Viardots would but say instead of sing,—if we might but see in tragedy the dramatic power lavished upon opera, I might not be simple enough to take up once more my old enthusiasm, and haunt the theatres at sixty-five ! Luckily, the age is a musical age, and there is small danger that any Queen of Song should exchange her notes for words—especially in a country where the notes of a prima donna are synonymous with bank-notes.

The first play I remember to have seen was in a barn—tragedy of course—the tragedy dear to heroes of the buskin, and no less dear to their youthful auditors, “ Richard the Third.” Ah ! I should have asked nothing better than to see Richard murdered in that barn every night ! Then came other play-goings more legitimate ; and readings of Shakespeare by bits, and here and there, I scarcely know how or when. For it may be reckoned amongst the best and dearest of our English privileges, that we are all more or less educated in Shakespeare ; that the words and thoughts of the greatest of poets are, as it were, engrafted into our minds, and must, to a certain extent, enrich and fructify the most barren stock. Shakespeare came to me I cannot tell how. But my first great fit of dramatic reading was, I am ashamed to

say, of very questionable origin : a stolen pleasure ; and therefore—alas ! for our poor sinful human nature !—therefore by very far more dear.

This is the story.

My childhood was, as I have elsewhere said, a very happy one ; scarcely less happy in the great London school where I passed the five years between ten years old and fifteen, than at home : to tell the truth, I was well nigh as much spoilt in one place as in the other ; but as I was a quiet and orderly little girl, and fell easily into the rules of the house, there was no great harm done, either to me or to the school discipline.

One exception, however, did exist, both to my felicity and to my obedience, and that one might be comprised in the single word—Music.

How my father, who certainly never knew the tune of "God save the King" from that of the other national air "Rule Britannia," came to take into his head so strong a fancy to make me an accomplished musician I could never rightly understand, but that such a fancy did possess him I found to my sorrow ! From the day I was five years old, he stuck me up to the piano, and although teacher after teacher had discovered that I had neither ear, nor taste, nor application, he continued fully bent upon my learning it. By the time my London education commenced, it had assumed the form of a fixed idea.

The regular master employed in the school was Mr. Hook (father of Theodore), then a popular composer of Vauxhall songs, and an instructor of average ability. A large smooth-faced man he was, good-natured, and civil spoken ; but failing, as in my case

everybody else had failed, to produce the slightest improvement, my father, not much struck by his appearance or manner, decided as usual that the fault lay with the teacher ; and happening one day to fall in with a very clever little German professor, who was giving lessons to two of my schoolfellows, he at once took me from the tuition of Mr. Hook, and placed me under that of Herr Schuberl, who, an impatient, irritable man of genius, very speedily avenged the cause of his rival music-master, by dismissing in her turn the unlucky pupil.

Things being in this unpromising state, I began to entertain some hope that my musical education would be given up altogether. In this expectation I did injustice to my father's pertinacity. This time he threw the blame upon the instrument ; and because I could make nothing after eight years' thumping upon the pianoforte, resolved that I should become a great performer upon the harp.

It so happened that our school-house (the same by the way, in which poor Miss Landon passed the greater part of her life), forming one angle of an irregular octagon place, was so built that the principal reception-room was connected with the entrance-hall by a long passage and two double doors. This room, fitted up with nicely-bound books, contained, amongst other musical instruments, the harp, upon which I was sent to practise every morning ; sent alone, most comfortably out of sight and hearing of every individual in the house, the only means of approach being through two resounding green baize doors, swinging to with a heavy bang the moment they were let go ; so that as the change from piano to harp, and

from the impulsive Herr Schubert to the prim, demure little Miss Essex, my new music-mistress, had, by no means worked the miracle of producing in me any love of that detestable art, I very shortly betook myself to the book-shelves, and seeing a row of octavo volumes lettered "Théâtre de Voltaire," I selected one of them, and had deposited it in front of the music-stand, and perched myself upon the stool to read it in less time than an ordinary pupil would have consumed in getting through the first three bars of "Ar Hyd y Nos."

The play upon which I opened was "Zaïre." "Zaïre" is not "Richard the Third," any more than M. de Voltaire is Shakespeare; nevertheless, the play has its merits. There is a certain romance in the situation; an interest in the story; a mixture of Christian piety and Oriental fervour, which strikes the imagination. So I got through "Zaïre," and when I had finished "Zaïre," I proceeded to other plays—"Œdipe," "Mérope," "Alzire," "Mahomet," plays well worth reading, but not so absorbing as to prevent my giving due attention to the warning doors, and putting the book in its place, and striking the chords of "Ar Hyd y Nos," as often as I heard a step approaching; or gathering up myself and my music, and walking quietly back to the school-room as soon as the hour for practice had expired.

But when the dramas of Voltaire were exhausted, and I had recourse to some neighbouring volumes, the state of matters changed at once. The new volumes contained the comedies of Molière, and, once plunged into the gay realities of his delightful world, all the miseries of this globe of ours—harp, music-books,

practisings, and lessons—were forgotten; Miss Essex melted into thin air, “*Ar Hyd y Nos*” became a nonentity. I never recollected that there was such a thing as time: I never heard the warning doors; the only tribulations that troubled me were the tribulations of “*Sganarelle*;” the only lessons I thought about—the lessons of the “*Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.” So I was caught; caught in the very fact of laughing till I cried, over the apostrophies of the angry father to the galley, in which he is told his son has been taken captive. “*Que diable alloit-il faire dans cette galère!*” The apostrophe comes true with regard to somebody in a scrape during every moment of every day, and was never more applicable than to myself at that instant.

Luckily, however, a person who discovered my delinquency was one of my chief spoilers, the husband of our good schoolmistress, himself a Frenchman, an adorer of the great dramatist of France, and no worshipper of music. He was also a very clever man, with a strong and just conviction that no proficiency in any art could be gained without natural qualifications and sincere good will. Accordingly, when he could speak for laughing, what he did say sounded far more like a compliment upon my relish for the comic drama than a rebuke. I suppose that he spoke to the same effect to my father. At all events, the issue of the affair was the dismissal of the poor little harp-mistress, and a present of a cheap edition of Molière for my own reading. I have got the set still—twelve little foreign-looking books, unbound, but covered with a gay-looking pink paper, mottled with red, like certain carnations.



Such was my first regular, or rather irregular, introduction to the delightful world of the written drama. Since then I have read in the originals, or in such translations as I could lay my hands upon, the plays of almost every country, from the grand tragedy of the Greeks (perhaps, next to Shakespeare and Molière, the finest drama that exists), down to Claudie, the charming French pastoral, which fell in my way last month.

Besides the plays themselves, the history of their writers has always had for me a singular attraction, especially when such histories have been written by themselves.

Colley Cibber, one of the earliest of these dramatic autobiographers, is also one of the most amusing. He flourished in wig and embroidery, player, poet, and manager, during the Augustan age of Queen Anne, somewhat earlier and somewhat later. A most egregious fop according to all accounts he was, but a very pleasant one notwithstanding, as your fop of parts is apt to be. Pope gained but little in the warfare he waged with him, for this plain reason, that the great poet accuses his adversary of dulness, which was not by any means one of his sins, instead of selecting one of the numerous faults, such as pertness, petulance, and presumption, of which he was really guilty.

His best book, the "Apology for his Life," shows that he was a keen observer and a pleasant describer of his brother actors. My first extract is taken from a higher stage, and is one of the many graphic touches that give us so complete and personal a knowledge of the Merry Monarch, and makes us

almost partakers of the kindness which (unjustly, I suppose) was felt towards him by his subjects.

"In February, 1684-5, died King Charles II., who being the only king I had ever seen, I remember, young as I was, his death made a strong impression upon me, as it drew tears from the eyes of multitudes who looked no farther into him than I did. But what, perhaps, gave King Charles this peculiar possession of so many hearts was his affable and easy manner in conversing, which is a quality that goes farther with the greater part of mankind than many higher virtues which in a prince might more immediately regard the public prosperity. Even his indolent amusement of playing with his dogs, and feeding his ducks in St. James's Park (which I have seen him do), made the common people adore him."

The allusion in the next passage is probably to Titus Oates:—

"The inferior actors took occasion, whenever they appeared as braves or murderers, to make themselves appear as frightful and inhuman figures as possible. In King Charles's time, this low skill was carried to such an extravagance, that the King himself, who was black-browed and of a swarthy complexion, passed a pleasant remark upon his observing the grim looks of the murderers in 'Macbeth,' when turning to his people in the box about him, 'Pray what is the meaning,' said he, 'that we never see a rogue in a play, but odds fish! they always clap him on a black periwig, when it is well known one of the greatest rogues in England always wears a fair one?'"

Here are some vivid portraits of actors.

"This actor (Sandford) in his manner of speaking varied very much from those I have already mentioned. His voice had an acute and piercing tone, which struck every syllable of his words distinctly upon the ear. He had likewise a peculiar skill in his way of marking out to an audience whatever he judged worth their more than ordinary notice. When he delivered a command, he would sometimes give it more force by seeming to slight the ornament of harmony. \* \* \* Had Sandford lived in Shakespeare's time, I am confident his judgment would have chosen him above all other actors to have played his Richard III. I leave his person out of the question, which though naturally made for it, yet that would have been the least part of his recommendation. Sandford had stronger claims to it. He had sometimes an uncouth stateliness in his motion, a harsh and sullen pride of speech, a meditating brow, a stern aspect, occasionally changing into an almost ludicrous triumph over all goodness and virtue ; from thence falling into the most persuasive gentleness and soothing candour of a designing heart. These, I say, must have preferred him to it."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Nokes was an actor of a quite different genius from any I have ever read, heard of, or seen, since or before his time ; and yet his general excellence may be comprehended in one article, viz., a plain and palpable simplicity of nature, which was so utterly his own, that he was often as unaccountably diverting in his common speech as on the stage. I saw him once giving an account of some table-talk to another actor behind the scenes, which a man

of quality accidentally listening to, was so deceived by his manner, that he asked him if that was a new play he was rehearsing \* \* \* He scarce ever made his first entrance in a play but he was received with an involuntary applause, not of hands only, but by a general laughter, which the sight of him provoked and nature could not resist ; yet the louder the laugh, the graver was his look upon it ; and even the ridiculous solemnity of his features was enough to have set a whole bench of bishops into a titter, could he have been honoured with such grave and right reverend auditors. In the ludicrous distresses which by the laws of comedy folly is often involved in, he sunk into such a mixture of piteous pusillanimity and a consternation so ruefully ridiculous and inconsolable, that when he had shook you to a fatigue of laughter it became a moot point whether you ought not to have pitied him. When he debated any matter by himself, he would shut up his mouth with a dumb, studious pout, and roll his full eye into such a vacant amazement, such a palpable ignorance of what to think of it, that his silent perplexity gave your imagination as full content as the most absurd thing he could say upon it. \* \* \* His person was of the middle size ; his voice clear and audible ; his natural countenance grave and sober. In some of his low characters that became it he had a shuffling shamle in his gait, with so contented an ignorance in his aspect, and such an awkward absurdity in his gesture, that had you not known him, you could not believe that naturally he had a grain of common sense."

Nature sometimes reproduces herself. There is much in this description to remind us of the late Mr. Liston. The following observations upon the great

tragedian Betterton's personation of Hamlet are in the best style of dramatic criticism :

"You may have seen a Hamlet, perhaps, who on the first appearance of his father's spirit has thrown himself into all the straining vociferation requisite to express rage and fury ; and the house has thundered applause, though the misguided actor was all the while tearing a passion into rags. The late Mr. Addison, whilst I sate by him to see this scene acted, made the same observation, asking me with some surprise if I thought Hamlet should be in so violent a passion with the ghost, which, though it might have astonished, had not provoked him. For you may observe that in this beautiful speech the passion never rises beyond an almost breathless astonishment, or an impatience limited only by filial reverence to inquire into the suspected wrongs that may have raised him from his peaceful tomb, and a desire to know what a spirit so seemingly distressed might wish or enjoin a sorrowful son to execute towards his future quiet in the grave. This was the light into which Betterton threw this scene, which he opened with a pause of mute amazement ; then rising slowly to a solemn, trembling voice, he made the ghost equally terrible to the spectator as to himself ; and in the descriptive part of the natural emotions which the ghostly vision gave him, the boldness of his expostulation was still governed by decency—manly, but not braving—his voice never rising into that seeming outrage or wild defiance of what he naturally revered."

The book is full of pictures like this :

"In the solemn formality of Obadiah in 'The Committee,' he (Underhill) seemed the immoveable log he

stood for ; a countenance of wood could not be more fixed than his when the blockhead of a character required it. His face was full and long ; from his crown to the end of his nose, was the shorter half of it ; so that the disproportion of his lower features, when soberly composed with an unwandering eye hanging over them, threw him into the most lumpish, moping mortal that ever made beholders merry."

Little bits of truth like this are also plentiful :

"From whence I would observe, that the short life of beauty is not long enough to form a complete actress."

Colley Cibber survived to his eighty-seventh year, retaining to the last the companionable qualities which had made his society coveted by persons of all ranks, and dying without decay and without pain.

Richard Cumberland is another vivacious specimen of dramatic authorship—more vivacious in his "Life" (I mean his printed life) than on the stage. Son of a popular and amiable bishop, grandson of the very learned but unpopular and unamiable scholar, Dr. Bentley, he competed successfully at Cambridge for the honours of the University, took a high degree, obtained a Fellowship of Trinity, and might, probably, have attained to his grandfather's station as head of that eminent College, had he not been tempted by Lord Halifax to accept the post of his private secretary, a career for which the eminently irritable and susceptible temper, which Sheridan has devoted to a cruel immortality in his *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, rendered him eminently unfit.

It was, however, a very good position for seeing the

world, and becoming acquainted with men of high name and various character.

This is his first impression of Garrick as an actor. The play was "The Fair Penitent."

"Quin presented himself, upon the rising of the curtain, in a green velvet coat, embroidered down the seams, an enormous full-bottomed periwig, rolled stockings, and high-heeled, square-toed shoes; with very little variation of cadence, and in a deep, full tone, accompanied by a sawing kind of action, which had more of the senate than the stage in it, he rolled out his heroics with an air of dignified indifference that seemed to disdain the plaudits that were showered upon him—Mrs. Cibber, in a key high pitched, but sweet withal, sang, or rather recitativèd, Rowe's harmonious strain. But when, after long and eager expectation, I first beheld little Garrick, then, young and light, and alive in every muscle and in every feature, come bounding on the stage, and pointing at the wittol Altamont and the heavy-paced Horatio (Heavens, what a transition!) it seemed as if a whole century had been swept over in the space of a single scene; old things were done away, and a new order at once brought forward bright and luminous, and clearly destined to dispel the barbarisms and bigotry of a tasteless age, too long attached to the prejudices of custom, and superstitiously devoted to the illusions of imposing declamation."

His first introduction to official life was little to his taste.

"The morning after my arrival, I waited on Mr. Pownall at his office in Whitehall, and was received by him with all possible politeness, but in a style of

such ceremony and form as I was little used to, and not much delighted with. How many young men at my time of life would have embraced this situation with rapture. The whole town indeed was before me, but it had not for me either friend or relation to whom I could resort for comfort or for counsel. With a head filled with Greek and Latin, and a heart left behind me in my college, I was completely out of my element. I saw myself unlike the people about me, and was embarrassed in circles, which, according to the manners of those days, were not to be approached without a set of ceremonies and manœuvres not very pleasant to perform, and when awkwardly performed, not very edifying to behold. In these graces Lord Halifax was a model; his address was noble and imposing; he could never be mistaken for less than he was, whilst his official secretary, Pownall, who egregiously overacted his imitations of him, could as little be mistaken for more than he was."

One of his happiest characters is that of Bubb Dodington.

"His town house in Pall Mall, his villa at Hammersmith, and his mansion in the country, were such establishments as few nobles in the nation were possessed of. In either of these he was not to be approached but through a suite of apartments, and rarely seated but under painted ceilings and gilt entablatures. In this villa you were conducted through two rows of antique statues, ranged in a gallery floored with the rarest marbles, and enriched with columns of granite and lapis-lazuli; his saloon was hung with the finest Gobelin tapestry, and he slept in a bed encanopied with peacocks' feathers, in



the style of Mrs. Montagu. When he passed from Pall Mall to La Trappe, it was always in a coach, which I could suspect had been his ambassadorial equipage at Madrid, drawn by six fat, unwieldy black horses, short docked, and of colossal dignity. Neither was he less characteristic in apparel than in equipage. He had a wardrobe loaded with rich and glaring suits, each in itself a load to the wearer ; and of these I have no doubt but many were coeval with his embassy above mentioned, and every birth-day had added to the stock. In doing this he so contrived as never to put his old dresses out of countenance by any variation of the fashion of the new. In the meantime his bulk and corpulence gave full display to a vast expanse and profusion of brocade and embroidery ; and this, when set off with an enormous tie periwig and deep-laced ruffles, gave the picture of an ancient courtier in his gala habit, or Quin in his stage dress. Nevertheless it must be confessed this style, though out of date, was not out of character, but harmonized so well with the person of the wearer, that I remember, when he made his first speech in the House of Peers as Lord Melcombe, all the flashes of his wit, all the studied phrases and well-timed periods of his rhetoric lost their effects, simply because the orator had laid aside his magisterial tie, and put on a modern bag wig, which was as much out of costume upon the broad expanse of his shoulders as a cue would have been upon the robes of the Lord Chief Justice.

“Having thus dilated more, perhaps, than I should have done upon this distinguished person’s passion for magnificence and display, when I pro-

ceed to inquire into those principles of good taste which should naturally have been the accompaniments and directors of that magnificence, I fear I must be compelled by truth to admit that in these he was deficient. Of pictures he seemed to take his estimate only by their cost: in fact, he was not possessed of any; but I recollect his saying to me one day in his great saloon at Eastbury, that if he had half a score pictures of a thousand pounds a-piece, he would gladly decorate his walls with them; in place of which, I am sorry to say, he had stuck up immense patches of gilt leather, shaped into bugle-horns, upon hangings of rich crimson velvet; and round his state bed he displayed a carpeting of gold and silver embroidery which too glaringly betrayed its derivation from coat, waistcoat and breeches, by the testimony of pockets, button-holes and loops, with other equally incontrovertible witnesses subpoenaed from the tailor's shopboard."

Lord Halifax is sent as Lord-Lieutenant to Ireland, to which we owe the following portrait of a great celebrity of Dublin:

"I had more than once the amusement of dining at the house of that most singular being George Faulkner, where I found myself in a company so miscellaneous and whimsically classed, that it looked more like a fortuitous concourse of oddities jumbled together from all ranks, orders and descriptions, than the effect of invitation and design. Description must fall short in the attempt to convey any sketch of that eccentric being to those who have not read him in the pages of Jephson, or seen him in the mimicry of Foote, who, in his portraits of Faulkner, found the

only sitter whom his extravagant pencil could not caricature; for he had a solemn intrepidity of egotism and a daring contempt of absurdity that fairly outfaced imitation, and like Garrick's 'Ode on Shakespeare,' which Johnson said defied criticism, so did George, in the original spirit of his own perfect buffoonery, defy caricature. He never deigned to join in the laugh that he had raised, nor seemed to have a feeling of the ridicule he had provoked. At the same time that he was pre-eminently and by preference the butt and buffoon of the company, he could find openings for hits of retaliation which were such left-handed thrusts as few could parry. Nobody could foresee where they would fall, nobody, of course, was fore-armed; and as there was in his calculation but one super-eminent character in the kingdom of Ireland, and he, the printer of the 'Dublin Journal,' there was no shield against George's arrows, which flew where he listed, and hit or missed as chance directed, he cared not about consequences.

"He gave good meat and excellent claret in abundance; I sate at his table once from dinner till two in the morning, while George swallowed immense potations with one solitary sodden strawberry in the bottom of the glass, which he said was recommended to him for its cooling properties. He never lost his recollection or equilibrium the whole time, and was in excellent foolery; it was a singular coincidence, that there was a person in company who had received his reprieve at the gallows, and the very judge who had passed sentence of death upon him. This did not in the least disturb the harmony of the society nor embarrass any human creature present. All

went off perfectly smooth, and George, adverting to an original portrait of Dean Swift, which hung in the room, told us abundance of excellent and interesting anecdotes of the Dean and himself with minute precision and an importance irresistibly ludicrous. There was also a portrait of his late lady, Mrs. Faulkner, which either made the painter or George a liar, for it was frightfully ugly, whilst he swore she was the most divine object in creation. George prosecuted Foote for lampooning him on the stage of Dublin. His counsel, the Prime Serjeant, compared him to Socrates, and his libeller to Aristophanes. This, I believe, was all that George got by his course of law, but he was told he had the best of the bargain in the comparison, and sate contented under the shadow of his laurels."

The account of Soame Jenyns is no less happy.

"A disagreement about a name or a date will mar the best story that ever was put together. Sir Joshua Reynolds luckily could not hear an interrupter of this sort; Johnson would not hear, or if he heard, would not heed him. Soame Jenyns heard him, heeded him, set him right, and took up his tale where he had left it without any diminution of its humour, adding only a few more twists to his snuff-box, a few more taps upon the lid of it, with a preparatory grunt or two, the invariable forerunner of the amenity that was at the heels of, them. He was the man who bore his part in all societies with the most even temper and undisturbed hilarity of any man I ever knew. He came into your house at the very moment you had put upon your card; he dressed himself, to do your party honour, in all the colours of the jay;

his lace, indeed, had long since lost its lustre, but his coat had faithfully retained its cut since the days when gentlemen wore embroidered figured velvets, with short sleeves, high cuffs, and buckram skirts. As Nature had cast him in the exact mould of an ill-made pair of stiff stays, he followed her so close in the fashion of his coat, that it was doubted if he did not wear them; because he had a protuberant wen just under his poll, he wore a wig that did not cover above half his head. His eyes were protruded like the eyes of the lobster, who wears them at the end of his feelers, and yet there was room between one of these and his nose for another wen, that added nothing to his beauty. Yet I heard this good man very innocently remark, when Gibbon published his history, that he wondered anybody so ugly could write a book.

“Such was the exterior of a man who was the charm of the circle, and gave a zest to every company he came into. His pleasantry was of a sort peculiar to himself; it harmonised with everything; it was like the bread to your dinner; you did not, perhaps, make it the whole or principal part of your meal, but it was an admirable and wholesome auxiliary to your other viands. Soame Jenyns told you no long stories, engrossed not much of your attention, and was not angry with those who did. His thoughts were original, and were apt to have a very whimsical affinity to the paradox in them. There was a terseness in his repartees that had a play of words as well as of thought, as when speaking of the difference of laying out money upon land, or purchasing into the funds, he said, ‘One was principal without interest, and the other interest without principal.’ ”

Although the serious part of "The Wheel of Fortune," that is to say, the whole character of Penraddock, is admirably conceived and admirably written (the recollection of John Kemble in that play can never be erased), Mr. Cumberland's power seemed to desert him whenever he attempted tragedy or verse of any sort. His lines on "Affectation," which have great merit, form the only exception that I remember to this assertion; certainly his epic of "Calvary" does not; neither does his share in the "Richard Cœur de Lion," of Sir James Bland Burgess.

## AFFECTATION.

Why, Affectation, why this mock grimace?  
 Go, silly thing, and hide that simpering face!  
 Thy lisping prattle, and thy mincing gait,  
 All thy false mimic fooleries I hate;  
 For those art Folly's counterfeit, and she  
 Who is right foolish, hath the better plea:  
 Nature's true idiot I prefer to thee.  
 Why that soft languish? Why that drawling tone?  
 Art sick? art sleepy?—Get thee hence: begone!  
 I laugh at all those pretty baby tears,  
 Those flutterings, faintings, and unreal fears.  
 Can they deceive us? Can such mummeries move,  
 Touch us with pity, or inspire with love?  
 No, Affectation, vain is all thy art,  
 Those eyes may wander over every part,  
 They'll never find their passage to the heart.

A great part of Mr. Cumberland's amusing work is taken up by an account of his disastrous mission in Spain, which, undefined in its object, and unsuccessful in its result, brought nothing but disappointment to the Government or the negotiator. After his return from Madrid, he fell back upon literature, and closed a long and varied life in an advanced age at Tunbridge Wells.

## XXII.

## FEMALE POETS.

MRS. CLIVE, MRS. ACTON TINDAL, MISS DAY,  
MRS. ROBERT DERING.

THERE never was a more remarkable contrast between the temperament of the poetess and the temperament of the woman, than that which exists between the thoughtful gravity, the almost gloomy melancholy that characterise the writings of that celebrated initial letter, the "V." of "*Blackwood's Magazine*," and the charming, cheerful, light-hearted lady, known as Mrs. Clive. This discrepancy has been acknowledged before now to exist between the tastes and the tempers of nations. The French in their old day, before this last revolution, perhaps before any of their revolutions, the French of our old traditions and our old travellers, the *Sternes* and the *Goldsmiths*, with their *Watteau* pageantries, their dances in the open air, and their patient love of the deepest and most unmingled tragedy, afforded a notable instance of this contrast. But that which is observable in Mrs. Clive's case is still more striking. I have never known any creature half so cheerful. Happy sister, happy mother, happy wife, she even bears the burden of a large fortune and a great house without the slightest diminution of the delightful animal spirits, which always seem to me to be of her many gifts the choicest. Moreover, enjoyment seems to be her mode of thankfulness ; as,

not content with being happy herself, she has a trick of making everybody happy that comes near her. I do not know how she contrives it, but such is the effect. There is no resisting the contagious laughter of those dancing eyes.

As, however, everybody that thinks deeply, as she does, must have some moments of sadness, she is content to put them into her writings : sometimes in prose, for her "Story of the Great Drought" has an intensity of tragic power, a realization of impossible horrors, such as gave their fascination to the best works of Godwin ; sometimes in verse, where the depth of thought and fearless originality of treatment, frequently redeem the commonest subject from anything like commonplace. Here is an example :

#### THE GRAVE.

I stood within the grave's o'ershadowing vault ;  
Gloomy and damp, it stretched its vast domain ;  
Shades were its boundary ; for my strained eye sought  
For other limits to its width in vain.

Faint from the entrance came a daylight ray,  
And distant sound of living men and things ;  
This, in the encountering darkness passed away,  
That, took the tone in which a mourner sings.

I lit a torch at a sepulchral lamp,  
Which shot a thread of light amid the gloom ;  
And feebly burning 'gainst the rolling damp,  
I bore it through the regions of the tomb.

Around me stretched the slumbers of the dead,  
Whereof the silence ached upon mine ear ;  
More and more noiseless did I note my tread,  
And yet its echoes chilled my heart with fear.

The former men of every age and place,  
From all their wanderings, gathered round me lay  
The dust of withered empires did I trace,  
And stood mid generations passed away.



I saw whole cities, that in flood or fire,  
Or famine, or the plague, gave up their breath;  
Whole armies, whom a day beheld expire,  
Swept by ten thousands to the arms of death.  
I saw the Old World's white and wave-swept bones,  
A giant heap of creatures that had been;  
Far and confused the broken skeletons  
Lay strewn beyond mine eyes' remotest ken.  
Death's various shrines—the urn, the stone, the lamp—  
Were scattered round confused amid the dead;  
Symbols and types were mouldering in the damp,  
Their shapes were wanting and their meaning fled.  
Unspoken tongues, perchance in praise or woe,  
Were chronicled on tablets Time had swept;  
And deep were half their letters hid below  
The thick, small dust of those they once had wept.  
No hand was here to wipe the dust away;  
No reader of the writing traced beneath;  
No spirit sitting by its form of clay;  
No sigh nor sound from all the heaps of death.  
One place alone had ceased to hold its prey;  
A form had pressed it and was there no more;  
The garments of the grave beside it lay,  
Where once they wrapped HIM on the rocky floor.  
HE only with returning footsteps broke  
The eternal calm with which the tomb was bound;  
Among the sleeping dead alone HE woke  
And blessed with outstretched hands the host around.  
Well is it that such blessing hovers here,  
To soothe each sad survivor of the throng  
Who haunt the portals of the solemn sphere,  
And pour their woe the loaded air along.  
They to the verge have followed what they love,  
And on the insuperable threshold stand;  
With cherished names its speechless calm reprove,  
And stretch in the abyss their ungrasped hand.  
But vainly there they seek their soul's relief,  
And of the obdurate Grave its prey implore;  
Till death himself shall medicine their grief,  
Closing their eyes by those they met before.

All that have died, the earth's whole race, repose  
Where Death collects his treasures, heap on heap ;  
O'er each one's busy day the nightshades close ;  
Its actors, sufferers, schools, kings, armies—sleep.

It would be difficult to frame a better wish for the writer and the woman, than that both may remain unchanged—that the shadow may still cast its deep and thoughtful veil over the poetry and the sunshine, and the blessing rest upon the life !

The exact reverse of Mrs. Clive may be found in Mrs. Acton Tindal, whose verse, so free, so buoyant, so firm and so graceful, derives most of its charms from its resemblance to the sweet and lovely creature by whom it was written. There is a sparkling vividness in her style which has the life and colour of painting. The very choice of her subjects is picturesque. With an extent and variety of reading, remarkable even now in one of the youngest of our female writers, she instinctively fixes upon some theme of processional grace and beauty, and throws all the truth and tenderness of her sentiment around figures already interesting by historical association. The "Infant Bridal" might be transferred to canvas without altering a word.

"Richard Duke of York, second son of Edward IV., was married to Anne Mowbray, Duchess of Norfolk in her own right. The bridegroom was not five years old, and the bride scarcely three. The ceremony was performed in St. Stephen's Chapel, A.D. 1477."

The sunbeams of the early day  
Streamed through the lattice grim  
And up the dark aisle's pillared way  
Swelled loud the nuptial hymn ;  
And passed along a gorgeous band  
Of courtly dames and fair,  
Of belted barons of the land  
The bravest best were there.

But slowly moved the bright array,  
For gently at its head  
Two blooming children led the way  
With short and doubtful tread :  
The fair boy-bridegroom and the bride,  
(Like Cupid's train in eld),  
Meekly and loving, side by side,  
Each other's hands they held.

Half pleased and half surprised they seemed,  
For in each kindred eye  
Love mixed with pity fondly gleamed,  
And mournful gravity.  
A fear, for them who knew no fear,  
On each heart darkly fell ;  
They view life's future through a tear  
Who know the past too well.

The bridegroom bore a royal crown  
Amid the shining hair,  
That like a golden veil fell down  
In tresses soft and fair.  
The bearing of the noble child  
His princely lineage told,  
Beneath that brow so smooth and mild  
The blood of warriors rolled.

All coyly went the sweet babe-bride,  
Yet oft with simple grace,  
She raised, soft-stepping by his side,  
Her dark eyes to his face.  
And playfellows who loved her well  
Crowns of white roses bore,  
And lived in after years to tell  
The infant bridal o'er.

Then words of import strange and deep  
The hoary prelate said,  
And some had turned away to weep  
And many bowed the head.  
Their steady gaze those children meek  
Upon the old man bent,  
As earnestly they seemed to seek  
The solemn word's intent.

Calm in the blest simplicity  
That never woke to doubt ;  
Calm in the holy purity  
Whose presence bars shame out !  
Then turned they from each troubled brow  
And many a downcast eye,  
And gazed upon each other now  
In wondering sympathy ;  
And nestled close, with looks of love,  
Upon the altar's stone ;  
Such ties as Seraphs bind above  
These little ones might own.  
And sweetly was the babe-bride's cheek  
Against the fair boy pressed,  
All reverent, yet so fond and meek,  
As kneeling to be blest.  
Then smiled they on their grand array  
And went forth hand in hand,  
Well pleased to keep high holiday  
Amid that gorgeous band.  
Alas ! for those that early wed  
With such prophetic gloom,  
For sadly fell on each young head  
The shadow of the tomb.  
Scarce had the blossoms died away  
Of the rose-wreaths they wore,  
When to her mouldering ancestry  
The little bride they bore.  
Her marriage garlands o'er her bier,  
Bedewed with tears, were cast ;  
And still she smiled as though no fear  
O'erclouded her at last.  
A life as short, and darker doom,  
The gentle boy befel :  
He slept not in his father's tomb,  
For him was heard no knell !  
One stifling pang amid his sleep  
And the dark vale was passed !  
He woke with those who've ceased to weep,  
Whose sun is ne'er o'ercast,

A garland floats around the throne,  
 Entwined by angel hands,  
 Of such fair earth-buds, newly blown,  
 Culled from a thousand lands.  
 A melody most pure and sweet  
 Unceasingly they sing,  
 And blossoms o'er the mercy seat,  
 The loved babe-angels fling !

I have now to introduce another fair artist into the female gallery of which I am so proud ; an artist whose works seem to me to bear the same relation to sculpture that those of Mrs. Acton Tindal do to painting. The poetry of Miss Day is statuesque in its dignity, in its purity, in its repose. Purity is perhaps the distinguishing quality of this fine writer, pervading the conception, the thoughts, and the diction. But she must speak for herself. As "The Infant Bridal" might form a sketch for an historical picture, so "Charlotte Corday" is a model, standing ready to be chiselled in Parian stone.

Stately and beautiful and chaste,  
 Forth went the dauntless maid,  
 Her blood to yield, her youth to waste,  
 That carnage might be stayed.  
 This solemn purpose filled her soul,  
 There was no room for fear,  
 She heard the cry of vengeance roll  
 Prophetic on her ear.  
 She thought to stem the course of crime  
 By one appalling deed,  
 She knew to perish in her prime  
 Alone would be her meed.  
 No tremor shook her woman's breast,  
 No terror blanched her brow,  
 She spoke, she smiled, she took her rest,  
 And hidden held her vow.

She mused upon her country's wrong,  
Upon the tyrant's guilt,  
Her settled purpose grew more strong  
As blood was freshly spilt :  
What though the fair smooth hand were slight !—  
It grasped the sharpened steel ;  
A triumph flashed before her sight  
The death that it should deal.

She sought her victim in his den—  
The tiger in his lair ;  
And though she found him feeble then,  
There was no thought to spare.  
Fast through his dying guilty heart,  
That pity yet withstood,  
She made her gleaming weapon dart,  
And stained her soul with blood.

She bore the buffets and the jeers  
Of an infuriate crowd ;  
She asked no grace, she showed no fear,  
She owned her act aloud.  
She only quailed when woman's cries  
Bewailed the monster's fate,  
Her lips betrayed her soul's surprise  
That fiends gained aught but hate.

She justified her deed of blood  
In stern, exalted phrase,  
As in the judgment-hall she stood  
With calm, intrepid gaze.  
And when she heard her awful doom,  
Before the morn to die,  
Her cheek assumed a brighter bloom,  
And triumph lit her eye.

She marked a painter's earnest gaze,  
She raised to him her face,  
That he for men in other days  
Her raptured mien might trace.  
Some bold heroic words she penned  
To him her life who gave,  
And as approached her fearful end  
Her soul grew yet more brave.

She wore the bonds, the robe of red,  
     As martyrs wear their crown ;  
 She begged no mercy on her head,  
     She called no curses down ;  
 It was enough that she fulfilled  
     The work that was decreed ;  
 It was enough a voice was stilled  
     That doomed the just to bleed.  
  
 So beautiful, so filled with life,  
     So doomed, she passed along ;  
 Above the sense, the sound of strife,  
     Alone in the vast throng.  
 Some with mute reverence lowly bowed,  
     As thus the victim went ;  
 And some outpouring hatred loud,  
     The air with curses rent.  
  
 Without one tint of fresh youth paled,  
     Without one quivering breath,  
 Without one step that weakly failed,  
     That maiden sped to death ;  
 And with her lips yet glowing red,  
     And bright her beaming eyes,  
 To the sharp axe she bowed her head,  
     And closed her sacrifice.

Yet two more female figures, embodying a stern lesson.

THE TWO MAUDES.

Broidered robe, bespangled vest,  
 Raiment for a palace guest,  
     Wears proud Maude to-night ;  
 And her haughty smile is gay,  
 As shines forth that rich array  
     In the mirror bright.  
  
 Now, with triumph on her cheek,  
 And with looks that conquest speak,  
     See her pass along ;  
 Listen to the murmured praise,  
 Mark the fixed admiring gaze  
     Of the courtly throng !

Now she joins the stately dance,  
 And her tutored grace enchants,  
     Faultless is her mien ;  
 And of all the lovely crowd  
 She can hear it whispered loud  
     She to-night is queen.

And of all the vestments there  
 Hers is richest and most rare,  
     Wondrous is its cost ;  
 With apparel of less pride,  
 Where so many shone beside  
     She had triumph lost.

Therefore 'twas she gave command,  
 When the courtly ball was planned,  
     That her robe should be,  
 Though the time for toil was brief,  
 With the choicest flower and leaf  
     Rich in broidery.

If for this be weary sighs,  
 If for this be sleepless eyes,  
     She no less will shine ;  
 Unimpaired her bloom shall be,  
 And from care her bosom free,  
     In her vesture fine.

\* \* \* \*

Broidered robe, bespangled vest,  
 Raiment for a palace guest,  
     Maude the poor hath wrought ;  
 She who as a May-day queen  
 Danced upon the village-green,  
     Of gay Nature taught.

Then the sunshine, breeze and shower  
 Played with her as with a flower ;  
     Ruddy bloom had she :  
 As a balmy blushing morn,  
 When the rose blows, and the thorn,  
     She was sweet to see .



Now with pallor on her cheek,  
And with looks that sadness speak,  
    See her languid rise ;  
Listen to the harsh command,  
See her faint and trembling stand,  
    Whilst her task she plies.

Thronging to her spirit come  
Memories of village home,  
    Bee and flower and bird,  
Ruddy beam of early day,  
White-fleeced lambs, in sportive play,  
    Low of dappled herd ;

Breezy breath of heath-crossed hill,  
Silvery sound of trickling rill,  
    Bank where violets grow ;  
And her heart is throbbing fast,  
With these pictures of the past,  
    But no tears may flow.

Fevered is her low-bent brow,  
Wasted are her young limbs now,  
    Joy bath'lost its home ;  
Short the respite for relief,  
Stolen slumbers far too brief  
    For soft dreams to come.

Tainted is the air she breathes,  
Perfumeless the gaud she wreathes,  
    Garland false and cold.  
And the hearts around her seem  
As its flowers of mimic beam,  
    They no balm unfold.

Now before her dazzled eyes  
Lurid phantasms arise,  
    Light is wasting fleet,  
And the labourer more intent,  
Lest the fitful ray be spent  
    Ere her task's complete.

But the darkness gathers fast,  
And she scarcely knows at last  
How her fingers ply ;  
And she thinks it wondrous soon,  
Since the hour of glaring noon  
That the night is nigh.

Now her work is done.—Behold,  
Ye who shine in silk and gold,  
What is its high cost !  
She, who strove at your behest,  
She, whose eyes are robbed of rest,  
Sight through toil hath lost.

Woe to you vain child of clay !  
Woe to you in robes so gay,  
Queens might envy them !  
You with jewels overdone,  
Her have robbed who had but one  
Of a priceless gem !

No words of mine could add to the force and eloquence of this pleading—I had almost said of this fulmination. What, I would add, should go rather in mitigation of the crime imputed to the courtly beauty. Selfish as vanity is—dangerous as leading to all the sins that follow upon frivolity, I have a true faith in the general kindness and the general good-training of our young countrywomen, whether of the village green, or of the palace circle. I do not believe that any English lady would knowingly purchase a splendid dress at the cost of health to the artificer. Let them once think—let them once be brought to think—whether they can reasonably expect their orders to be executed within a given time, and what may be the amount of suffering caused by such execution, and, my life upon it, our Lady Maudes would give up their furbelows, and their embroideries, and trust to their native charms of grace and modesty to win as

much admiration as they know what to do with. But then they must be taught to think ; and in matters of humanity, they could hardly find finer precepts than in the poems of Miss Day.

These lady poets are all my friends ; I add yet another, personally a stranger, but still a friend, to the list—Mrs. Robert Dering.

## CHURCH SERVICES.

The chimes from yonder steeple  
Ring merrily and loud,  
And groups of eager people  
Towards their music crowd.

Before the altar's railing  
A bride and bridegroom stand,  
And lacy folds are veiling  
The loveliest in the land.

And every ear is trying,  
While all beside is still,  
To hear the bride replying  
Her soft but firm " I will."

The soft " I will " is spoken,  
A glance as soft exchanged,—  
That vow shall ne'er be broken  
Nor those fond hearts estranged.

Another train advances,  
No bridal train is this,  
Yet there are joyous glances,  
And whispered words of bliss.

With youthful pride and pleasure  
Approach a happy pair,  
Their first and darling treasure  
Within the church they bear.

Their babe is now receiving  
Upon its placid face,  
The badge of the believing  
The holy sign of grace.

Sweet babe ! this world is hollow,  
A world of woe and strife.  
Take up thy cross and follow  
Where leads the Lord of Life.

Another train is wending  
Within the church its way,  
Whilst prayers are still ascending  
For blessings on that day.

But here no bride is blushing ;  
And here no babe is blest ;  
But mourners' tears are gushing  
For one laid down to rest.

Bright dawns the bridal morning ;  
The font to us is dear ;  
But come, and hear the warning  
That's spoken to us here !

A blight may soon be falling  
On joys however pure,  
But let us make our calling  
And our election sure.

And then the day of sorrow  
Which lays us in the earth,  
Shall have a brighter morrow  
Than that which saw our birth.

The sweetness and melody of these stanzas, as well as their pervading holiness, render them no unfitting conclusion to this little garland of verses, varying in manner, but of which we may truly say that they are in tone and feeling most English and most feminine.

END OF VOL. I.



